

Hafa Adai!

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By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres will lead a delegation that heads today, Monday, to South Korea to sign a travel bubble agreement that is key to the CNMI's efforts to jumpstart its economy by opening its doors to South Korean tourists under its pilot Tourism Resumption Investment Program.

NMI delegation heads to South Korea to sign travel bubble deal

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* inquiry, Torres disclosed yesterday that he and the delegation will meet with officials of South Korea's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transportation to sign the travel bubble agreement this Wednesday, June 30.

The governor said they will also go to the Korea Center of Disease Control Agency and conduct site visits.



Torres

Separately, they will also have meetings with airlines and top travel agencies, he added.

Torres said he and Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios, along with the Marianas Visitors Authority, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., COVID-19 Task Force, and business partners continue to seek solutions to bring back the

See TRAVEL on Page 4

Court issues property lien vs IPI

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The U.S District Court for the NMI has issued an abstract judgment notice—essentially a lien—on all real properties

owned by Imperial Pacific International LLC in favor of the seven construction workers who are suing IPI over labor violations and human trafficking.

See COURT on Page 4

'Strides for Pride' remembers 5 LGBTQ+ pioneers

By **JOSHUA SANTOS**
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REPORTER

Friday's "Strides for Pride"—essentially a walk and parade from the Garapan Fishing Base to the American Memorial Park—was a joyous occasion that celebrated Pride Month in the CNMI but also had a somber aspect, with the CNMI's LGBTQ+ community and its allies remembering five members who have already passed on.

T-Project founder Tyra Sablan said that last Friday was a celebration of how far the

See STRIDES on Page 4



Members of the community make their way from Garapan Fishing Base to American Memorial Park as part of last Friday's "Strides for Pride." More than 200 people took part in last Friday's activity. Members of Marianas High School's Pride Club held up pictures of five of the CNMI's past LGBTQ+ figures who have since passed away.

JOSHUA SANTOS

Man accused of molesting 12-year-old is denied release

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The Superior Court denied the temporary release of a 61-year-old man who

is accused of molesting a 12-year-old boy, after expressing concern about the suitability of the suspect's wife as third-party custodian.

See MAN on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6:50pm, June 27, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population
Fully Vaccinated: **63.2%**

Pfizer/BioNTech	
Initiated:	24,848
Fully Vaccinated:	22,581
Moderna	
Initiated:	4,087
Fully Vaccinated:	3,794
Janssen	
Fully vaccinated:	418

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	8,316	12	8,328
Recovered	8,098	6	8,104
Active	73	6	85
Deaths	139	0	139
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	176,658		

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	183	0	183
Traced via Travel Screening	147	0	147
Traced via Community Screening	36	0	36
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	26,131*		
Days since last community transmission	96		

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

INSIDE



LOCAL

The Marianas has adopted the "SafeTravels" program of the World Travel & Tourism Council.

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NATION

Rescue crews found another body in the rubble of a collapsed 12-story condominium tower near Miami.

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WORLD

Former Philippine President Benigno Aquino III is buried at the Manila Memorial Cemetery on Saturday.

PAGE 12



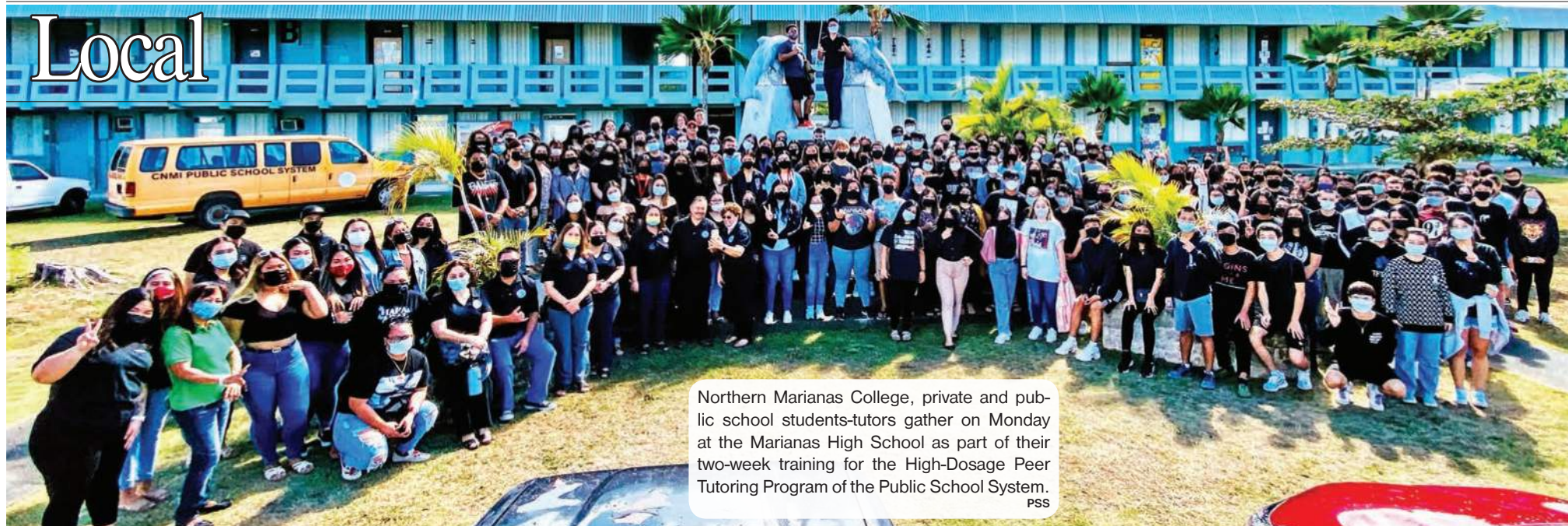
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Local



Northern Marianas College, private and public school students-tutors gather on Monday at the Marianas High School as part of their two-week training for the High-Dosage Peer Tutoring Program of the Public School System. PSS

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PSS unveils 'High-Dosage' Peer Tutoring Program

An innovative student-learning-and-teaching program pioneered by the Public School System officially launched its two-week orientation and training last June 14, 2021 at Kagman Elementary School.

Called the "High-Dosage Peer Tutoring Program," this will give some 237 student-tutors the opportunity to assist lower grade public school students (K-12). These student-tutors—composed of students from the Northern Marianas College, PSS, and private schools received their training following the launch ceremony.

This program is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Commissioner of Education, Federal Programs Office, Human Resources Office, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Office of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation, Office of Student Support Services, Office of Food and Nutrition, and Finance Office.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada and his key management led the formal unveiling of this tutoring program. This was held at the Marianas High School cafeteria on June 21, 2021.

The High-Dosage Peer Tutoring Program will officially begin today, June 28, and these students-tutors will be working alongside classroom teachers in all of the school district's elementary, middle and high schools on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Assisting Jacqueline A. Quitugua (senior director of Curriculum and Instruction) and Amy Bohman-Blanco (English Language Learners program manager) in the implementation of this program are Dr. Rizalina Liwag (senior director of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation) as well as the OCI Team—composed of Asapmar B. Ogumoro (science program

manager), Dr. Jessica B. Taylor (Career and Technical Education Program director), Giselle A. Butalid (Statistical Literacy analyst), Patricia R. Aguon-Cruz (administrative officer), and Jonas M. Barcinas (Chamorro and Carolinian Language and Heritage Studies program director).

Last June 21, the students-tutors received their trainings from Dr. Yvonne Pangelinan (senior director for Student Support Services), Arlene Lizama (finance and budget director), Lucretia Deleon Guerrero (human resource officer), Jesse Tenorio (State Infrastructure Technology director), Dr. Bobby Cruz (director of Instructional Technology), Lorraine CatiENZA (Distance Education program coordinator), and Ada.

This program is funded under PSS' share of the federal Education Stabilization Fund, which is a component of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2020.

This tutoring program supports the district's goals of providing learning opportunities to identified public school students and provide support for learning loss and instructional loss this school year.

The goals are: (1) each student will receive equitable, rigorous, relevant, and evidence-based instruction and support to meet their academic, social-emotional and wellbeing targets; (2) student growth to be guided by instructions and services informed by data and continuous improvement, preparing them for college and career; (3) students will receive instruction and support from high performing personnel; (4) students benefit from an efficient, effective and fiscally-responsible school system, and (5) students will develop positive social-emotional skills in a caring, safe and inclusive environment. (PSS)

COTA gets \$2.3M to buy electric buses, build charging station

The Northern Mariana Islands has been awarded \$2.3 million in funding for infrastructure upgrades under the Federal Transit Administration's 2021 Low or No Emission Bus Program.

The money totaling \$2,373,675 would go to the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority, which will use it to purchase battery-

powered buses, build a charging station, and provide workforce development training.

COTA provides transit services on Saipan and this funding is intended to improve service and reliability for residents who use transit to access jobs, school, healthcare, and other services.

This grant is just part of ap-

proximately \$182 million in funding that FTA of the U.S. Department of Transportation is awarding for low and no emissions buses and the facilities that support them and is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by the end of the decade.

The project selections were approved as part of the Low- or No-Emission (Low-No) Grant program, which funds the deployment of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses and supporting equipment and facilities. A total of 49 projects in 46

states and territories will receive funding through the program.

"Public transit connects people to jobs, services, and loved ones—and when our transit buses produce low or zero emissions, it's an even bigger win for communities," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "There is overwhelming demand to support low and no emission transit all around the country—in both rural and urban areas—and meeting this need is a matter of climate responsibility and public health."

FTA's Low-No Program supports transit agencies

in purchasing or leasing low- or no-emission buses and other transit vehicles that use technologies such as battery electric and fuel-cell power to provide cleaner, more efficient transit service in communities across the country. This year's funding opportunity prioritized applications with an environmental justice component as well as those that support workforce development to help America's transit workers succeed even as their jobs change along with technology.

"The Federal Transit Administration is proud to support our transit partners to upgrade their fleets with newer, cleaner vehicles and facili-

ties," said FTA administrator Nuria Fernandez. "These projects are all designed to take dirty buses off the road and replace them with clean, electric models, improving the air we breathe and protecting our planet for future generations."

Eligible applicants for Low-No funding included public transit agencies, state transportation departments and Indian Tribes. Projects were evaluated based on criteria defined in federal law and in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, including the applicant's demonstration of need, project benefits and implementation strategies, and capacity for completing the project. (PR)

US House Subcommittee OKs Kilili bill that asks for \$391,500 for Rota dialysis project

The U.S. House Appropriations Agriculture Financial Services Subcommittees approved Fiscal Year 2022 bills this week that include Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) request for \$391,500 funding for the Rota dialysis expansion project.

Sablan said in his e-kilili newsletter over the weekend that his request for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. Peritoneal Dialysis Expansion Project was included in the FY 2022 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA Appropriations bill.

"This project will expand home dialysis for individuals [on] Rota, allowing them to stay at home instead of relocating to Saipan to obtain treatment," he said.

The \$391,500 funding for Rota dialysis expansion is part of his \$2.3-million community funding requests that the House Appropriations Agriculture Financial Services Subcommittees approved in its FY 2022 legislations.

Sablan said his community funding requests include the \$952,394 for small businesses and \$980,639 for health Infor-

mation Technology upgrades.

Sablan said that creating a Small Business Development Center Business Innovation Incubator at the Northern Marianas College will foster small business innovation throughout the Marianas. It will be based on Saipan

Sablan said his request for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. will fund health IT upgrades to improve interoperability between islands.

"The project will improve interisland connectivity by upgrading the phone systems, facilitating central patient storage, ensuring higher utilization of telehealth, and reducing unnecessary off-island travel," Sablan said.

He said the remaining subcommittees will mark up their respective bills in July before heading to the full Appropriations Committee for consideration. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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'Beer Beef Band' food festival at Tinian on July 24

By JOSHUA SANTOS
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REPORTER

TINIAN—The Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan is coming up with a new food festival that will be called "Beer Beef Band," which is intended

to showcase the island's cattle industry. The event has a tentative date of July 24 this year.

In an interview last Saturday, Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan hopes the event will join the Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival—better known by Tinian residents as "Pika Fest"—as another food festival on the island that will draw crowds from the community and tourists alike.

According to Aldan, he hopes that the event will be Tinian's equivalent to Saipan's Taste of the Marianas, envisioning top restaurants and hotels showcasing their best dishes using Tinian beef. Aldan also has plans for there to be a cooking competition for the community, where contestants put up their best beef dishes for judging.

In the context of the COVID-19



Aldan

pandemic and the economic downtime that the CNMI has been experiencing, Aldan sees this period as the perfect time to assess what could be other economic drivers alongside tourism as the CNMI slowly opens up. "We're lucky

that we have federal funds coming our way, but sooner or later those federal funds will dry out, so where do we go from here? I think this is the perfect time to really look at what economic stimulants that we can get out of our islands," said Aldan.

Aldan also hinted at some progress in the revival of Tinian's beef industry, saying that members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently inspected Tinian's slaughterhouse. According to Aldan, all that is left to do is "very minor stuff."

Podcast explores marriage equality, LGBTQ rights in Guam

TAMUNING, Guam—In recognition of Pride Month, the newest episode of the Memoirs Pasifika podcast looks at Guam's recent history regarding LGBTQ civil rights and how, in 2015, it became the first US territory to legalize same-sex marriage. It features candid interviews with Lt. Gov. Joshua Tenorio, Public Auditor BJ Cruz, attorney Bill Pesch, and other prominent members of the island's LGBTQ community.

Memoirs Pasifika, a Guam-based podcast that premiered in February 2021, explores events, movements, and people in modern Micronesian history. Each episode explores a different topic.

The program's fifth episode, released Friday and anchored by Dr. Vivian Dames, tells the story of Guam's campaign for marriage equality through interviews with people who played a role in the his-

toric effort. They discuss how the movement gained momentum, the broader significance of the eventual legal victory, and current issues regarding LGBTQ rights and opportunities here.

Dames is a retired professor of Social Work/Women & Gender Studies at the University of Guam with interest in community organizing, social justice, and social policy. She has been engaged in advocacy and community organizing related to social work and the human services, as well as prison reform, land use, welfare and economic justice, militarization, and marriage equality. From 2010-2017, she served as director and anchor / host of Beyond the Fence, a weekly program that aired on Public Radio Guam KPRG, featuring interviews and coverage of public events exploring the challenges of building community "beyond the fence," where

U.S. military bases and other installations are located.

Recent Memoirs Pasifika podcast episodes explore other fascinating events in the region's history. For example, the third episode discusses Operation New Life, when Guam served as the primary processing center for 112,000 Vietnamese refugees after the Fall of Saigon in April 1975. The first episode, anchored by Dr. Michael Lujan Bevacqua, tells the story of then-Guam governor Carlos Camacho's eventful trip to Vietnam to visit Guam's battle-weary troops during Christmas 1969. The trip unexpectedly helped shape Guam's political history, launching a practice among politicians nationwide that continues up until today. (PR)

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

MAN

From Page 1

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho denied the bail modification that would have allowed the release of Edmund Altares Castaneda, 61, who was arrested for alleged sex abuse of a minor in the first, second, and third degrees.

Following his bail modification hearing last Friday, Castaneda was remanded back to the custody of the Department of Corrections.

During the hearing, Castaneda's lawyer, Office of the Public Defender's Karie Comstock, proposed that the defendant be allowed to post \$500 of his initial \$50,000 bail and be released to Emilia Alaba, Castaneda's wife, as his third-party custodian.

However, the court denied the request because Camacho was concerned that Alaba may not satisfy the responsibility of a third-party custodian, which is to be the eyes and ears of the court.

Assistant attorney general James Houston, who represents the government, also voiced concerns about the proposed modified bail being set too low, stating that the bail is meant to ensure the safety of the community while the case is ongoing.

Comstock argued, though, that



A Department of Corrections officer escorts Edmund Castaneda, 61, to his hearing at the Guma Hustisia in Susupe. KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

\$500 is a substantial amount for Castaneda's wife, who is unemployed.

Camacho later clarified that the bail amount is not the concern because in the court of law, everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty and should be given the opportunity to post bail, but rather, whether the third-party custodian is suitable for the job.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Castaneda was arrested at around 10:09am last June 17 after the victim's father called police upon learning from his son about Castaneda's alleged molestation. The child al-

leged that Castaneda started molesting him since he was 5 or 6 years old.

In a forensic interview with the Department of Youth Services, the victim said he was sleeping when Castaneda allegedly came inside his room and molested him, which he described to the DYS advocate in detail. The child said Castaneda had been doing things like this since he was 5 or 6 and has occasionally kissed him on the lips.

Castaneda told police in an interview that he only "opened" the child's pants as a joke and he's always joking with him.

community as a whole, have worked very hard to make the CNMI a safe place for people.

Because of this, Alepuyo said, the CNMI has been selected to sign the agreement with the South Korean government to initiate the travel bubble between the CNMI and South Korea.

"This agreement is crucial to the success of the Tourism Resumption Investment Program which will, in turn, provide jobs for our people," the MVA chair said.

The first flight from Incheon to Saipan is scheduled to fly next month, July.

MVA said a familiarization tour

is still expected to come in the first weeks of July and that they are expecting 50 people from top management of travel agencies, media, and social media influencers.

Aside from Torres and Alepuyo, *Saipan Tribune* learned from MVA that the other delegation members who are heading to South Korea are Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, Governor's Council of Economic Advisers members/businessmen Brian Shin and Tommy Kim, COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez, MVA board director Ivan Quichocho, MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo, and MVA marketing manager Tatiana Babauta.

STRIDES

From Page 1

CNMI's LGBTQ+ community has come, but also had a deeper meaning. Members of the MHS Pride Club held up pictures of five of the CNMI's past LGBTQ+ figures who have since passed away.

The five who were honored last Friday were Tonei Camacho, who was the first gay bar owner in the CNMI; Dr. Calistro Cabrera, who was the first openly gay physician in the CNMI; Pamela Tenorio, who was the first openly transwoman in the CNMI; Joseph "Spanky" Fejeran, and Lani Okaruru, a transwoman who left Saipan in 2001 for better opportunities but was brutally murdered at 28 years old in Oregon. Her case remains unsolved to this day.

More than 200 members and supporters of Saipan's LGBTQ+ community took part in Friday's "Strides for Pride." The event began with a

roadside waving at Garapan Fishing Base in the afternoon and ended with more festivities at the American Memorial Park amphitheater in the evening. The event was made possible through a collaboration among Pride Marianas, Pride Marianas Youth, and T-Project CNMI.

After participating in a roadside waving at Garapan Fishing Base, the event's 200-plus participants walked from the base to the American Memorial Park amphitheater, where they were treated to performances by the Marianas High School Glee Club, "Pride Talks" hosted by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council, a short animated film depicting the experience of growing up transgender, and the 2019 documentary *State of Pride*.

Capping the CNMI's celebration of Pride Month this year was the Drag Race Marianas 5K that was held on Saturday and a "PMY volunteers pot luck and sunset sails" on Sunday.

June is marked internationally as Pride Month.

COURT

From Page 1

Magistrate Judge Heather Kennedy of the District Court for the NMI issued the abstract of judgment notice against IPI last week. The notice creates a lien on all real property owned by the defendant and gives the seven workers priority over all other liens.

By definition, an abstract judgment appears as a lien, or claim, against a defendant's publicly recorded property. If the judgment is not satisfied in the ordered time period, the lienholder can force a property sale to satisfy the judgment.

According to the court's notice, the lien is effective unless satisfied for a period of 20 years and may be renewed by filing a notice of renewal.

The amount of judgment is \$5,430,595.58, plus post-judgment interest at the applicable federal rate, plus attorneys' fees.

Recently, IPI asked the federal court to reconsider its \$5,915,595.98 default judgment in favor of the seven construction workers.

In her order last month, District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona, awarded the

plaintiffs a total of \$2,957,797.79 in compensatory damages, and \$2,957,797.79 in punitive damages. The judge also awarded the plaintiffs a total of \$332,350 for emotional distress, \$65,945.79 for lost income, \$359,502 for future lost income, and \$2,200,000 for pain and suffering.

The seven workers—Tianming Wang, Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Qingchun Xu, and Duxin Yan—were previous employees of IPI's former contractor and subcontractor, MCC International and Gold Mantis.

The original complaint was filed against Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) in December 2018.

An amended complaint was filed in March 2019 to include MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co. and IPI. It also added a claim for forced labor under the federal Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

To date, the workers have already settled with Gold Mantis and MCC International.

In its amended complaint, the workers asked the federal court to award them \$3.86 million in compensatory damages and \$7.72 million in punitive damages.

TRAVEL

From Page 1

CNMI's tourism market.

"We are fortunate [to have] a strong partnership with [the] South Korean government. You [may] recall, we got 60,000 Solgent COVID-19 test kits [from South Korea] at a time when it was almost impossible to get [them anywhere else]," the governor said.

MVA board chair Viola Alepuyo said yesterday that the CNMI, with the leadership of Torres and Palacios, the COVID-19 Task Force, along with every front-line worker, and the

Tinian joins destination transformation initiative of GCEA

Kilili launches 2021 App Challenge

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has launched the 2021 Congressional App Challenge. Every year, Sablan invites middle school and high school students to participate and showcase their technological design and coding skills. Students may compete individually or in teams of up to four by registering online at <http://www.congressionalappchallenge.us/>. Submissions are due November 1, 2021, and winning entries are displayed in the U.S. Capitol for one year.

"The App Challenge is a way for Congress to encourage students across the nation to bring their app ideas to life and hone their skills in computer science and coding," Sablan said. "And with school out, summer is a great time to learn how to code or develop existing coding skills."

Sablan hosts the Congressional App Challenge annually. Last year, 14 teams in the Marianas competed.

Short for "application," an "app" is software that can be run on a variety of devices for

different purposes, such as entertainment, health monitoring, or enhancing work performance.

Participants may create any type of app they like and on any platform, as long as it is original, appropriate, and is functional to some degree. Submission requirements include a registration form, app description, a 1-3 minute video demonstrating what the app does and how it works, and an exit questionnaire.

The 2020 winning app, "SRC," was designed by Marianas High School students Carson Lin, James Lin, Jun Du, and Jie Du. Their winning demo video can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SfTcnhOIng&feature=youtu.be>.

More details about the App Challenge are available on the congressional office website at <https://sablan.house.gov> or the App Challenge's official website, <http://www.congressionalappchallenge.us/>. For more information, contact the congressional office at kilili@mail.house.gov or call 323-2647. (PR)



Sablan

The Tinian Mayor's Office, Typhoon Sports Association, and the Fitbeat Anti-Tobacco Wellness, Tinian are joining the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers' Public Private Partnership campaign and commemorated the new partnership with a transformation project at the Broadway Estates Basketball Court this past weekend.

The facility has seen better days and through the combined efforts of the Tinian Mayor's Office, Typhoon Sports Association, and Fitbeat Anti-Tobacco Wellness, Tinian, the court's bleachers, backboard, and rims were replaced and braces were reinforced. The entire facility also got a fresh coat of paint, as GCEA members and officials and the Office of House Minority - CNMI House of Representatives of 22nd Northern Legislature and their staff and volunteers were on Tinian to assist in the transformation project.

The transformation of the basketball

court coincided with the second leg of the council's first-anniversary celebration. GCEA co-chair Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was pleased to have the island on board for this special occasion.

"The continued success of GCEA's Public Private Partnership initiative hinges on the involvement and commitment of the leaders and residents of Rota, Saipan, and Tinian. We are promoting the Marianas as a multi-island destination and we need everyone's support to transform our sites and village facilities for the benefit and enjoyment of our visitors and residents. This transformation campaign is part of our joint efforts to revive our tourism industry to provide the needed jobs for residents and generate revenues that will help rebuild our economy," Torres said.

The Broadway Estates Basketball Court is the 60th site that has been ad-

opted since the GCEA launched the PPP program last summer.

"I commend the Typhoon Sports Association and Fitbeat Anti-Tobacco Wellness, Tinian for stepping up and the Tinian Mayor's Office for its leadership in taking on this task. I encourage other groups in the government and private sectors to support the PPP campaign by adopting sites and village facilities. The islands are our home, and it is our shared responsibility to take care of them. Together, we can," Torres added.

The third and final leg of GCEA's first-anniversary celebration on Saipan has been moved from July 3 to July 24. New PPP partners and volunteers are welcome at all PPP events. Sign-up information can be found on the GCEA's Facebook and Instagram pages (@cnmigov.economy) or can be requested by email at gceacnmi@gmail.com. (PR)



The Governor's Council of Economic Advisers members and officials and the Office of House Minority - CNMI House of Representatives of 22nd Northern Legislature and their staff and volunteers have their picture taken after transforming the roadway Estates Basketball Court this past weekend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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22nd Taste of The Marianas Int'l Food Festival on Aug. 27-29

The 22nd Annual Taste of The Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden will be held on Aug. 27-29, on the island of Saipan, bringing some of the best island cuisine and entertainment together in what is expected to be the island's largest gathering in over a year.

The event will be held at the Garapan Fishing Base from 5pm to 10pm with 14 food and two beverage vendors confirmed.

This annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority will return following a hiatus in 2020 due to COVID-19. The evening event will again feature affordable dishes from local hotels and restaurants, live entertainment, and arts and crafts sales.



File photo shows Thai House staff serving customers at the 21st Annual Taste of The Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden on May 25, 2019, at American Memorial Park, Saipan.

"We know the community has missed Taste of The Mari-

anas, and with the anticipated resumption of international

flights in July, we look forward to bringing back one of

MVA

IN BRIEF

WHEN: Aug. 27-29, from 5pm to 10pm

WHERE: Garapan Fishing Base

ENTRY POINT: Garapan Public Market

PROTOCOLS: Temperature check, attendees must submit contact information and wear a wristband

Saipan's most popular events in August," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "We are excited to be celebrating Taste with the community once again."

COVID-19 protocols will be strictly followed at the event. There will be one point of entry near the Garapan Public Market, and attendees must undergo a temperature check, submit their contact information, and wear a wristband at the event. Vendors will accept both Taste of The Marianas

orange, blue, or green tokens or cash; tokens will not be sold this year. Local arts and crafts will also be available for sale.

For sponsorship details or more information, contact MVA community projects specialist Ray Villagomez at rvillagomez@mymarianas.com or 1.670.664.3200.

The MVA's latest signature event was Tinian Hot Pepper Festival held in February 2021. **(PR)**

CHCC nurses certified in suicide intervention

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., in partnership with the Northern Marianas College, certified 10 CHCC registered nurses in the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

ASIST is an evidence-based suicide intervention training program that provides participants with the skills necessary to connect, understand, and assist persons who may have thoughts or be at risk for suicide. It provides a personalized, life-assisting, first-aid intervention that reinforces help-

seeking by those at risk for suicide. Since 2018, the CHCC Community Guidance Center ASIST trainers have certified 423 individuals in the CNMI, 378 from Saipan and 45 from Rota. Plans to offer the training on Tinian are in progress.

The two-day workshop was held at NMC on June 23 and 24, 2021. Mia Jones from CGC, along with Kaelani Demapan from NMC, facilitated the workshop.

The training was made possible with support from

the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Program (5H79SM062879) and NMC.

For more information on ASIST, visit www.living-works.net. **(PR)**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nurses of the Commonwealth Health Center show off their certificates after undergoing a two-day Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training at the Northern Marianas College on June 23 and 24, 2021. The training was led by Community Guidance Center ASIST trainers



Triple J sponsors category in 37th Saipan fishing tourney

The Triple J Saipan Group recently donated \$2,250 to the Saipan Fishermen's Association for the upcoming 37th Annual

Saipan International Fishing Tournament.

The Triple J Saipan Group will be sponsoring this year's mahi-mahi category,

with payouts to first, second, and third place finishers. The 37th Saipan International Fishing Tournament will take place on the

weekends of July 10 and 11 (Saturday and Sunday), at the Smiling Cove Marina. The tournament's official time will be from 6am to

6pm on both days.

The public is encouraged to bring the family to see some of the local fishermen's finest catch. **(PR)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left to right: J.D. Tenorio, prize & giveaway chairman, Saipan Fishermen's Association; Ringo Medina, general manager, Surf Club Restaurant; Mario Valentino, facilities senior superintendent, Triple J Saipan; Rachel Roque, property manager, Triple J Saipan; Curtis Dancoe, solicitation chairman, SFA; Sean Ficke, general manager, Triple J Motors; Scott Shular, vice president, SFA; Marah Javier, secretary, SFA; Shane Villanueva, advertising & marketing chairman, SFA; Rods Hernandez, Triple J Motors, sales associate; Alex Sablan outreach chairman, SFA; Perry Inos, business development manager, Triple J Saipan; Joseph Deleon Guerrero, hospitality chairman, SFA.

EUCON's Dr. Christian Wei reelected as TRACS commissioner

The Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, or TRACS, has reelected Dr. Christian Wei of the EUCON International University to another three-year term as a TRACS commissioner, covering the period from July 1, 2021, until June 30, 2024.

Dr. Matthew Beemer, who is chairman of the nomination committee of TRACS, informed Wei of his reelection last June 4, 2021. Wei has been a TRACS commissioner since 2011.

Wei graduated from the Orient Fundamental Bible College in Taiwan, and later went to Bob Jones University for further Bible training. In May 1987 he received his M.A. in Theology. In May of 1992 he graduated from BJU with a Ph.D. in Theology.

In 2002, Wei founded the EUCON International College, (now EUCON International University) for the 2 T training (certificate program for pastors and preachers of house churches in China).

EUCON International University is a degree granting institution of higher education in the CNMI and TRACS recently reaffirmed its accredited status as a Category III institution. It is approved to offer the following programs:

- Certificate of Achievement in Chinese Missions
- Certificate of Achievement in ESL
- Bachelor of Arts in Bible
- Bachelor of Science in Education
- Master of Arts in Theology

TRACS is recognized by the United States Department of Education and the Council of Higher Education Accreditation as a national accrediting body for Christian institutions, colleges, universities, and seminaries. **(PR)**

'Healthcare services for veterans on Rota and Tinian long overdue'

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs executive officer Stanley T. Iakopo recently reached out to the Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Healthcare System in Honolulu, Hawaii to raise the importance of being able to better provide healthcare services for veterans on Tinian and Rota.

Iakopo believes this can be achieved by having the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs pursue a mutually beneficial partnership with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., allowing CHCC's medical health centers on Tinian and Rota to expand its services and serve as Veterans Affairs outreach clinics.

Iakopo brought up this idea in his meeting with Dr. Adam M. Robinson Jr., director of the Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Healthcare System at the Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Honolulu, Hawaii last May 5.

In a statement last Wednesday, Iakopo stated that CHCC is the CNMI's only fully operational hospital and acknowledged that medical health centers on both islands already exist—the Tinian Health Center and Rota Health Center. However, the CNMI only has one Veterans Affairs contracted outreach clinic, which is currently at the Marina Heights II Business Plaza in Puerto Rico, Saipan. Veterans on Tinian and Rota who need



CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs executive officer Stanley T. Iakopo shares a photo with director of the Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Healthcare System Dr. Adam M. Robinson Jr. after their meeting at the Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Honolulu, Hawaii on May 5.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

veteran-centric healthcare services have to fly to Saipan at their own expense.

In a separate phone call on Thursday, Iakopo clarified that veterans on Tinian and Rota can go to and have been going to the health centers on their respective islands. However, adding on to the health centers' services and having them recognized as DVA-contracted outreach clinics will allow the medical centers to be part of the DVA's healthcare system and allow veterans on Tinian and Rota to avail of their veterans' benefits, such as the DVA covering costs of medical services.

As such, Iakopo made clear to Robinson how essential

it is that the DVA seeks out means to provide these veterans adequate healthcare. "Providing veterans on Rota and Tinian healthcare services is long overdue. ...Our veterans are dissatisfied with the unfulfilled and unsatisfactory services," said Iakopo in his statement.

In an statement that Robinson emailed to Iakopo, Robinson confirmed that he and Iakopo met "to discuss the unique needs of CNMI veterans and to explore options for enhancing care and services for veterans residing in Saipan, Tinian and Rota." According to Iakopo, Robinson will be visiting the CNMI at the end of this year.

sistance has set the submission deadline for fall 2021 "application only" on July 1, 2021, Thursday. (PR)

CHamoru commission meeting set

The Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'ná'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tãno' (Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) will hold its first July monthly virtual meeting on July 1, 2021, Thursday, from 12:30pm to 3:30pm on a Zoom link. Call Kumisión secretary Roland Blas for Zoom link information, special accommodations and agenda (rblaskumision@gmail.com) at 480-4047. (PR)

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Marianas Staffing Solutions, LLC, a CNMI Limited Liability Company was dissolved on June 23, 2021. Creditor and person with an outstanding claim against the Company is requested to notify the corporate office as soon as possible.

Marianas Staffing Solutions, LLC
P.O. Box 502370, Saipan, MP 96950

The Marianas adopts WTTC 'SafeTravels' program

The Marianas is among the latest destinations around the world to launch the "SafeTravels" program of the World Travel & Tourism Council.

According to WTTC's website, "the SafeTravels Stamp was created for travelers to recognize destinations and businesses around the world [that] have adopted the SafeTravels health and hygiene global standardized protocols."

The Marianas Visitors Authority has registered as the lead agency for issuing the SafeTravels Stamp in the Marianas. The program is free and available to all businesses in the Marianas who align their COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and Protocols with the SafeTravels Program guidelines. Business may now ap-



ply online at www.mymarianas.com/clean-safe-marianas.

"As our destination prepares to welcome more visitors, the 'Safe Travels' program is one additional tool to help us recover safely. It is globally rec-

ognized and developed by the WTTC to provide COVID-19 safety recognition for the tourism trade and domestic and international consumers," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "It encourages our community,

visitors, and tourism trade partners to confidently support businesses displaying the 'Safe Travels' Stamp."

Upon application and submission of business health and hygiene protocols, the CNMI COVID-19 Task Force will review each application. Businesses will be contacted by email for more information or to schedule an inspection at the business location. Once approved, businesses will receive a business safe travel logo package and window decals. (PR)



Faith, Hope and
KARIDAT
Catholic Charities - Diocese of Chalan Kanoa

Request for Proposal for Hardscaping

Karidat Social Services is soliciting competitive sealed proposals to perform hardscaping repairs at the Sister Remedios Community Center in Chalan Kanoa. The proposal must be submitted to Karidat's office at Sister Remedios Community Center, 3119 Chalan Kanoa Street, Chalan Kanoa Village, Saipan or mailed to Karidat Social Services; P.O. Box 501058, Saipan, MP 96950 by July 23, 2021 at 4:00 pm.

I. Contents of Proposal: The following information must be included in the Hardscaping Proposal:

- Title Page Containing
 - RFP Subject
 - Name of the Firm
 - Local Address
 - Telephone Number(s)
 - Email address
 - Name of contact person
 - Submission date

II. Transmittal Letter:

- A brief statement of your understanding of the work to be performed and an affirmative statement to perform work within the time period stipulated.
- State all inclusive fees for which the hardscaping will be performed.

III. Firm Profile:

Provide a brief description of you firm's personnel education background and experience, number of staff, staff level (partner, manager, supervisor, etc.) and listing of clients serviced.

IV. Proposal Evaluation Criteria: The proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the following hardscaping criteria. Responsiveness of the proposal in clearly stating understanding of the work to be performed.

- Hardscaping coverage
 - Remove and replace 725 LF of Chain Link Fence 5 FT high with 2 FT Concrete block Retaining wall, fence posts are 2.5 IN DIA 10.5 FT centers with 2.5 IN DIA contiguous top rails.
 - Remove and replace 800 LF of Chain Link Fencing, Fence is 6 FT high with 2 FT concrete block retaining wall, fence posts are 2.5 IN DIA on 10.5 FT centers with 2.5 IN DIA contiguous top rails.
 - Remove and replace Flag Pole, 1 each Flag Pole, 22.5 LF.
 - Replace 1 each Wooden Playground equipment with a rock wall, tube slide, regular slide and tower.

Project Notes: The fencing is perimeter fencing for the facility, not a stand-alone fence. The GPS per the SIR for the perimeter fence is: LAT: 15.1482050, LONG: 145.7031512.

- Overall estimates as well as the time estimates for each major section of the work to be performed.
 - Qualifications and experience of the firm
 - Size and structure of the firm
 - Ability to maintain continuity of project
 - Experience of the firm
 - Qualification and experience of staff to be assigned: education, position in the firm, number of years, and types of experience will be considered
 - Supervision to be exercised over the construction team
 - Contractor will be responsible for acquiring all required permits such as but not limited to: Historic Preservation and Zoning Permits.

V. Hardscaping Administration Matters:

- Hardscaping Planning meetings, interim conferences and exit conference may be attended by the following officials
 - Karidat's Board of Directors, the Executive Director and the Administrative Officer, FEMA Representatives, CNMI Public Assistance Office Representatives.
 - Karidat will issue the Contract Award on July 30, 2021.
 - The hardscaping field work must be completed in 30 days of notice to proceed.

VI. Confidentiality of Hardscaping Proposals: All hardscaping proposals will be reviewed in a confidential manner. Proposals must be labeled "CONFIDENTIAL" and transmitted to the Executive Director, Karidat Social Services, P.O. Box 501058, Saipan, MP 96950. It may also be hand delivered to Karidat's Office located at the Sister Remedios Community Center, 3119 Chalan Kanoa Street, Chalan Kanoa Village, Saipan.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Saipan & NI Municipal Council session

The 16th Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council will hold its 8th Regular Session on Thursday, July 1, 2021, at 10am at the Saipan and Northern Mariana Islands Municipal Council office at the Kiosku in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan. The agenda will include the Finance secretary's letter on the American Rescue Plan Act; updates on the municipal council building project; the Neighborhood Watch Program and the proposed CCV installation on school bus stations. (PR)

SHEFA fall deadline set

The Saipan Higher Education Financial As-

B & L CORPORATION IS IN NEED OF:

(1) Grinding Machine Operator

Must have at least 12 months experience in setting up & operate Industrial machine such as Crankshaft Grinding Machine, Milling, Reboring, Lathe Machine.

Interested applicants please call at 235-2567, look for Ms. Leila Bais or visit our location at Walumwo Street Chalan Lau Lau Saipan.

Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

‘This is a tragic day.’ Surfside condo collapse near Miami Beach needs answers

Security-camera video of the partial collapse at the Champlain Towers South Condo from a neighboring high rise early Thursday is both chilling and revealing.

When discovered in daylight, it revealed the real horror of what had happened. It showed that not one but two sections of the 12-story building had collapsed, one second after the other, turning as many as 55 units into rubble below. The grainy video comes with a warning to viewers because of what it likely signifies: multiple casualties.

By early afternoon, Miami-Dade Police Director Alfredo “Freddy” Ramirez said 99 residents were unaccounted for. It’s hard to fathom such a massive loss of life. By nightfall, three had been confirmed dead; 35 were dug out alive from destruction by search-and-rescue workers.

President Joe Biden has promised FEMA aid to Miami-Dade, said County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava. “This is the incredible, unimaginable situation none of us could have imagined,” she added.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis rushed to the scene and was stunned by what he saw. “The television doesn’t do it justice,” he said of the destruction he witnessed. “This is a tragic day.”

But hope had not abandoned those with loved ones unaccounted for. All afternoon, relatives with photos of loved ones begged the media for help in locating them, hoping they were hospitalized or dazed and walking around, or still trapped, but alive. It was a scene reminiscent of the aftermath of the 9/11 horror.

Experts watching the videos of the dramatic event were scratching their heads early on: This just does not happen, one said. Buildings are not designed to collapse this way.

So what happened here?

We haven’t seen such architectural failure since the 2018 collapse of the FIU pedestrian bridge, which killed six people, motorists driving underneath it. That tragedy was blamed on human error.

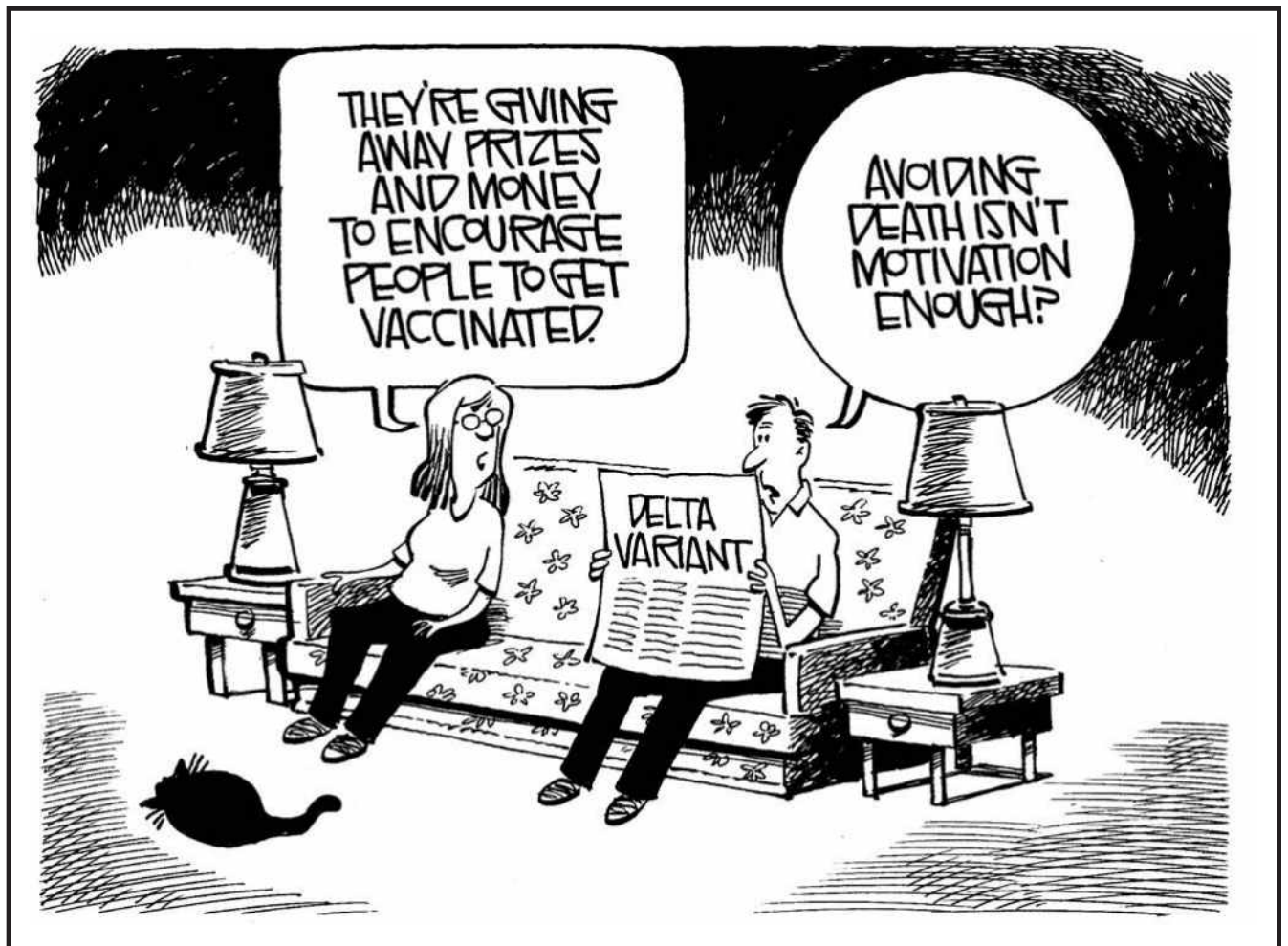
Finding out what caused this latest massive structural calamity will likely play out much like the aftermath of a plane crash: There will be several critical components found that led to the catastrophic event. But we need to know what those weaknesses were.

The building was up for its 40-year inspection, but there was also roof work being done and heavy construction nearby. One resident told reporters the pavers in the tower’s pool area had recently cracked, and that there was daily construction pounding.

An FIU professor introduced nature as a possibility.

Shimon Wdowinski, a professor in the Department of Earth and Environment, who studies the minuscule move-

See **SURFSIDE** on Next Page



America is not as woke as it appears

It is sometimes called “Conquest’s Second Law of Politics”: “Any organization not explicitly and constitutionally right-wing will sooner or later become left-wing.” I am hearing this more and more lately, leading me to wonder if it is actually true. And if so, why?

It is easy enough to find anecdotal evidence in support of it. Numerous foundations that arose from the fortunes of right-leaning founders, such as Pew or Ford or Hewlett, have morphed into left-wing institutions. I can’t think of a major foundation that came from a left-wing founder and then moved to the right. In the broader sweep of American history, universities have not been explicitly left-wing — but they are today.

And the law is not necessarily confined to nonprofit institutions, which are vulnerable to capture by left-leaning educated elites. This doesn’t explain the advent of “Woke Capital” — corporations pushing for explicitly Democratic or left-leaning policies, such as voting reform in Georgia. America’s professional sports leagues have to varying degrees endorsed conceptions of racial politics closer to that of the Democratic Party.

Therein lies a clue as to the nature of the ideological shift. Those same sports leagues are not in every way woke. Football, for instance, remains a violent sport, imposing injuries on many relatively disadvantaged young men, while the NBA allows itself to be bullied by China on issues of human rights.

One possibility is that institutions respond to whichever groups make the biggest stink about a given issue. On many political issues, the left cares more than the right, and so those left-wing preferences end up imprinted not only on public opinion-sensitive nonprofits but also on profit-maximizing corporations. Yet when it comes to statements about Hong Kong, China cares a great deal and most Americans do not, and so the NBA responds to that pressure.

Additional forces strengthen Conquest’s Second Law. Educational polarization increasingly characterizes U.S. politics, with more educated Americans more likely to vote Democratic. Those same Americans are also likely to run nonprofits or major corporations, which would partially explain the ideological migration of those institutions.

There are, of course, numerous U.S. institutions that have maintained or even extended a largely right-wing slant, including many police forces, significant parts of the military, and many Protestant Evangelical churches. Those institutions tend to have lower educational requirements, and so they are not always so influential in the media, compared to many left-wing institutions.

Furthermore, the military and police are supposed to keep out of politics, and so their slant to the right is less noticeable, although no less real. The left is simply more prominent in mass

By TYLER COWEN
Bloomberg News

Tyler Cowen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is a professor of economics at George Mason University and writes for the blog Marginal Revolution. His books include Big Business: A Love Letter to an American Anti-Hero.



media, so Conquest’s Second Law appears to be truer than it really is. (Note that by definition the law excludes explicitly right-wing media.)

Left-wing views, at least on some issues, might have more of a “least common denominator” element than do many right-wing views. On average, the intellectual right is more likely to insist on biological differences between men and women, whereas the intellectual left is more likely to insist on equality of capabilities. No matter your view, the left approach is easier to incorporate into mission statements, company slogans, and corporate human-resource policies. Egalitarian slogans require less explanation, are less likely to get an institution into trouble with the law, and are more compatible with a desire to attract a broad range of workers and customers.

So as nonprofit institutions have become larger and big business has risen in relative importance, those trends also will instantiate Conquest’s Law. As large organizations adopt a more egalitarian tone in their rhetoric, explicit right-wing views will tend to become less prominent in those organizations.

The common thread to these explanations is that left-wing views find it easier to win in spheres of reporting, talk and rhetoric—and that those tendencies strengthen over time.

It follows that, if Conquest’s Second Law is true, societies are more right-wing than they appear. Furthermore, it is the intelligentsia itself that is most likely to delude about this, living as it does in the world of statements and proclamations. It is destined to be repeatedly surprised at how “barbarian” American society is.

There is also a significant strand of right-wing thought, most notably in opposition to Marxism, that stresses the immutable realities of human nature, and that people change only so much in response to their environments. So all that left-wing talk doesn’t have to result in an entirely left-wing society.

Conservatives thus should be able to take some comfort in Conquest’s Second Law. They may find the discourse suffocating at times. But there is more to life than just talk — and that, for liberals as well as conservatives, should be counted as one of life’s saving graces.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Thailand, the United States, and the Marianas

The relationship between Thailand and the United States is strong, possibly understated, and of ongoing strategic importance. Thailand and America have a defense alliance partnership brought about from three separate signed agreements initiated over the past seven decades.

Thailand's location, which is east of the Andaman Sea and Indian Ocean, is perfectly located to act as a strategic node for American military activities between the Western Pacific and the Middle East.

American-Thai relations are characterized by cooperation in the realms of natural disaster response missions, fighting transnational crime and drug trafficking, military security partnering, public health, infrastructure development, and diplomacy.

How the military-to-military relationship remains key

Thailand continues to give the United States access to a strategically located naval base and air base named Sattahip and U-tapao, respectively. The largest annual multilateral multi-mission military exercise that takes place in Southeast Asia involves Thailand as host partner, supported by several other nations to include South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, several other countries, and, of course, the United States.

One central aspect that makes America incentivized to work with the Thais is that the air base at U-tapao has provided U.S. military aircraft with access to a key depot facility to refuel planes. This has been proven useful time and time again, as evidenced by operations performed to support the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Thailand also gave the United States access to several air force bases that were used by American military personnel to initiate large numbers of its aircraft operations against North Vietnam during America's conflict in Vietnam.

Today, Thailand purchases around two billion dollars' worth of military equipment from the United States. The close relationship between Thailand and the United States is partially offset by Thailand's closer relationship with China, which has sold a variety of military equipment to the Thais, including submarines and main battle tanks. Thailand also purchases military weapons from South Korea and Ukraine.

Fund public transit, not more roads

It's federal transportation policy season, with the House and Senate advancing bills to fund federal surface transportation programs for the next five years. That makes it a great time to reflect on the social and environmental impacts of our transportation policy.

For decades, the federal government has spent 80% of transportation infrastructure funds on highways, with only 20% left for public transit. Such lopsided spending leads to serious adverse consequences.

Transportation is the largest and fastest growing source of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, ahead of even coal or gas-fired power plants. Vehicle tailpipes also emit other toxic pollutants including nitrogen oxides. These are serious health hazards, especially for the poor and people of color, who are disproportionately exposed.

Our transportation system kills people more directly as well.

SURFSIDE

From Page 8

ment of the Earth's surface says records he recently examined for a paper showed that the land where the Champlain Towers South Condo stood had been sinking at an alarming rate, he told USA Today.

Who knows what role, if any, these elements played in creating a perfect storm of a tragedy?

Yes, investigators must get to the bottom of this horrible tragedy, with transparency.

But first, let's ensure that the community comes to the aid of the survivors, those in grief and those who have no place to call home anymore.

(c) 2021 *Miami Herald*

Some are concerned that America's ties to Thailand are slowly fading and being replaced by Chinese influence and economic power. Thailand's constant and everchanging governmental tensions amongst its populace, monarchy, and the military make it very difficult to divine how greater stability can be sustained for Thailand over the long term.

Other US-Thai activities

Despite China's growing influence with Thailand, the United States and Thailand continue to work together on law enforcement training that covers topics ranging from human trafficking to wildlife trafficking. Both nations maintain a robust intelligence relationship and economic trade cooperation between the two countries is also strong, valued at approximately \$50 billion.

The United States also spends billions on direct foreign investments into Thailand. This, however, is offset by Japan, which is Thailand's largest direct foreign investment party, and China, which is the country's largest trading partner.

Mariana islanders and folks from Thailand: Some similar concerns

As is the case with Guam and the Northern Marianas, Thailand's strong tourism industry continues to be pummeled by COVID 19. While Guam markets itself as a place for tourists to get vaccinated, Thailand has been selling Phuket island to international tourists, primarily from low COVID-19 risk Middle East nations and Singapore as the place for already vaccinated tourists to roam.

Thailand's biggest challenge with opening the country to international tourism is founded on the fact that most of the country's 70 million citizens are not vaccinated for COVID 19. Thailand also continues to see spikes in citizens testing positive for the disease.

Political and economic considerations

Unlike Thailand, Guam and the Northern Marianas are very restrained structurally in terms of how our Chamorro Pacific Islander civilization engages with the United States. Our island chain remains a priceless and tightly controlled military colonial region for the Pentagon and for America's military allies in the region.

RICK'S COLUMN

By RICK PEREZ

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Rick Perez used to serve in the U.S. military and has work experiences in public policy research and public affairs. He is passionate about national security and geopolitics and runs a newsletter called Guam Affairs at guamaffairs.substack.com. For questions or comments, contact Perez at rickp7839@gmail.com.

Unlike Thailand, which is a world leader in exporting rice, our Mariana Islands have little to export in terms of products or commodities to major world markets. Perhaps it is this lack of having an overall tangible marketable resource base that further compartmentalizes and limits our island chain's ability to leverage more fully what is available to our collective advantage.

Chamorro military veterans who fought in Southeast Asia: Unresolved matters

U.S. military veterans who served in Thailand during the Vietnam era conflict are now included in a Veterans Affairs bill currently being reviewed by Congress. Many American military veterans, including many service personnel of Chamorro ancestry, became ill from exposure to herbicide rainbow agents such as Agent Orange during the Vietnam conflict.

In addition, many of our Chamorro military veterans who served in Vietnam and throughout Southeast Asia during this time have never gotten a fair and comprehensive review of all their military files.

Not one Chamorro who served in the United States military during this time was ever awarded the Medal of Honor.

Now is the time for the Guam and NMI congressmen to push hard to have our Vietnam era veterans' prior military records reviewed with precision and for completeness because several Chamorros may merit the Medal of Honor and other military awards.

By BASAV SEN

Progressive Media Project



Basav Sen directs the Climate Policy Program at the Institute for Policy Studies. This column was produced and distributed by Progressive Perspectives, a project of The Progressive magazine.

But none of this goes far enough.

The truth is, we need a freeze on all highway expansion, except under the rarest circumstances (for example, expanding evacuation routes out of disaster-prone areas).

To the extent that we're spending federal money on roads, we should be investing in pedestrian and bicycle safety infrastructure and repairing structurally unsound bridges. And aid for other roadway maintenance, such as repairing potholes, should be conditioned on a highway expansion freeze.

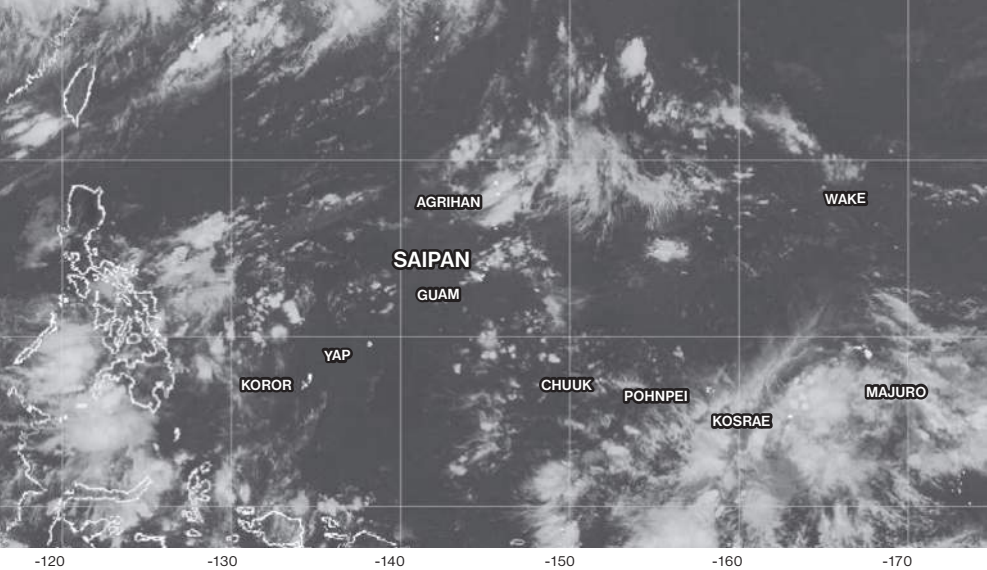
Expanding highways to alleviate congestion is a losing proposition, because growing capacity leads to growing traffic, a phenomenon known as "induced demand." And this, of course, leads to more pollution, carbon emissions and traffic deaths.

Instead, we should stop subsidizing sprawl and spend those savings on our resource-starved mass transit systems. Currently, as many as 45% of Americans have no access to public transit. Many of the remaining 55% may only have access to a bus that runs once every hour and stops running by 6 p.m., perhaps only on weekdays.

Like new fossil fuel pipelines, we need to start making highway expansion politically toxic. Let's dump highways and invest in transit.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms.	
88°	78°	88°	78°	88°	78°	88°	78°	88°	78°



PICTURE TIME: 7:31 AM, SUNDAY, JUNE 27, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite reveals mostly clear skies with just a few showers early this morning. Very spotty showers and thunderstorms are seen well to the west and east as subtle areas of convergent trade flow and upper-level divergence link together. ASCAT and surface obs indicate trade winds around 10 knots and buoys show seas of 3 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20

Source: Office of the Governor

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 76°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°	
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:49 AM	6:50 PM
Tuesday	5:49 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:50 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:50 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:50 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	9:02 AM	10:13 PM
Tuesday	-	9:59 AM	10:56 PM
Wednesday	-	10:52 AM	11:35 PM
Thursday	-	11:42 AM	-
Friday	12:11 AM	12:30 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Showers	57° / 52°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	90° / 73°	
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	88° / 82°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87° / 76°	
London	Mostly Cloudy	73° / 57°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	79° / 63°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 79°	
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	55° / 43°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
New York	Sunny	86° / 69°	
Osaka	Thunderstorms	84° / 75°	
Paris	Mostly Sunny	81° / 61°	
Busan	Thunderstorms	79° / 73°	
Rome	Sunny	90° / 68°	
Salem	Thunderstorms	90° / 73°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	61° / 55°	
Seoul	Thunderstorms	84° / 72°	
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	82° / 73°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	92° / 74°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:43 AM	Low Tide	1.43	
9:09 AM	High Tide	2.04	
4:43 PM	Low Tide	-0.20	
-	-	-	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 20, 2021								
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)					GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	6:30am	7:10am	1, 3, 5, 6,		UA174	4:50am	5:31am	1, 3, 5, 6,
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	6:30am	8:50pm	5 via Guam		UA184/174	9:50pm	5:31am+1	5 via Guam
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)					MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	7:05pm	8:50pm	5		UA184	9:50pm	3:45am+1	5
UA183	7:15pm	9:10pm	1, 3,		UA184	10:25pm	4:10am+1	1, 3
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. <i>(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)</i>								

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily	1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Daily	1205	11:00	11:15	Daily
1303	1:30PM	2:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri	1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1304	3:30PM	4:00PM	Daily	1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Daily	1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Daily	1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
3103	1:30PM	3:00PM	Tues/Wed/ Thurs/Fri	1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
3104	4:30PM	5:00PM	Daily	TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
ROTA TO GUAM				FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2105	11:30	11:45	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
				2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
				2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
				2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
				2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

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Business

Biden: Infrastructure vow was not intended to be veto threat

WASHINGTON (AP)—Aiming to preserve a fragile bipartisan deal on infrastructure, President Joe Biden en-

dorsed it “without hesitation” Saturday, walking back from a threat to veto it if Congress also didn’t pass an even larg-

er package to expand the social safety net.

Biden said he didn’t mean to suggest in earlier remarks that he would veto the nearly \$1 trillion infrastructure bill unless Congress also passed a broader package of investments that he and fellow Democrats aim to approve along party lines, the two together totaling some \$4 trillion.

Speaking on Thursday moments after fulfilling his hopes of reaching a bipartisan accord, Biden appeared to put the deal in jeopardy with his comment that the infrastructure bill would have to move in “tandem” with the larger bill.

Though Biden had been

clear he would pursue the massive new spending for child care, Medicare and other investments, Republicans balked at the president’s notion that he would not sign one without the other. “If this is the only thing that comes to me, I’m not signing it,” Biden said then of the infrastructure bill. “It’s in tandem.”

By Saturday, Biden was seeking to clarify those comments, after his top negotiators Steve Ricchetti and Louisa Terrell worked to assure senators that Biden remained enthusiastic about the deal.

“My comments also created the impression that I was issuing a veto threat on the very

plan I had just agreed to, which was certainly not my intent,” Biden said in a statement.

“I intend to pursue the passage of that plan, which Democrats and Republicans agreed to on Thursday, with vigor,” Biden added. “It would be good for the economy, good for our country, good for our people. I fully stand behind it without reservation or hesitation.”

Biden’s earlier remarks had drawn sharp criticism from some Republicans, including Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who tweeted on Friday, “No deal by extortion!” Others felt “blindsided” by what they said was a shift in their understand-

ing of his position.

Tensions appeared to calm afterward, when senators from the group of negotiators convened a conference call, according to a person who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private meeting.

“My hope is that we’ll still get this done,” said Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, the lead Republican negotiator, in an interview Friday with The Associated Press. “Our infrastructure is in bad shape.”

Biden was set to travel on Tuesday to Wisconsin for the first stop on a nationwide tour to promote the infrastructure package, the White House said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Tesla to recall 285,000 cars in China and fix cruise control

Tesla is recalling about 285,000 electric vehicles in China because the cruise-control function can be activated accidentally and cause cars to accelerate suddenly, creating a safety hazard, Chinese authorities said Saturday. In a message to customers on the Chinese social media platform Weibo, Tesla said “there are potential safety hazards in extreme cases.” China’s market regulator said the recall covers 211,256 Model 3 sedans and 38,599 Model Y compact crossover utility vehicles that were built in China and 35,665 Model 3s that were imported. The cars were produced between December 2019 and this month. The regulator said Tesla plans to upgrade cruise-control software on the vehicles remotely, which would save owners the chore of taking their car to a company store. It said Tesla will contact owners whose vehicles can’t be fixed remotely. (AP)

US mortgage rates rise over 3%; 30-year at 3.02%

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mortgage rates rose above the 3% mark this week for the first time in 10 weeks, as the economic recovery from the pandemic recession continues while inflation remains elevated. Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac reported that the average for the key 30-year home loan rose to 3.02% from 2.93% last week. By contrast, the rate stood at 3.13% a year ago. The rate for a 15-year loan, a popular option among homeowners refinancing their mortgages, jumped to 2.34% from 2.24% last week. Freddie Mac economists expect mortgage rates to gradually rise in the second half of the year. A government report Friday showed that consumer spending was flat in May but inflation posted a sizable gain, with prices excluding food and energy jumping by the largest amount in nearly three decades.

J&J agrees to pay \$230M to settle New York opioid claim

NEW YORK (AP)—John-

son & Johnson has agreed to pay \$230 million to New York state to settle claims that the pharmaceutical giant helped fuel the opioid crisis, Attorney General Letitia James said on Saturday. The drugmaker also agreed to permanently end the manufacturing and distribution of opioids across New York and the rest of the nation, James said in a statement announcing the settlement. The company “helped fuel this fire, but today they’re committing to leaving the opioid business—not only in New York, but across the entire country,” she said. The deal involving a lawsuit brought by James in 2019 removes Johnson & Johnson from a trial that is slated to begin next week on Long Island—part of a slew of litigation over an epidemic linked to nearly 500,000 deaths over the last two decades.

Southwest Airlines plans to raise minimum pay to \$15 an hour

DALLAS (AP)—Southwest Airlines plans to raise minimum pay to \$15 an hour for about 7,000 employees, citing the need to attract and keep workers as the airline industry continues to recover from the pandemic. Southwest said Friday that it intends for the raises to take effect on Aug. 1. The airline said the raises will work out to 7% to 11% for new hires and cover call center operators, customer service agents, skycaps and others. For some, the company will have to negotiate with labor unions. “Southwest continually works to attract and retain the best candidates for open positions,” said spokesman Brad Hawkins. “As part of this ongoing effort, Southwest is increasing minimum pay rates so that all hourly employees will make at least \$15 per hour.” Southwest’s announcement comes as air travel picks up at the beginning of the summer vacation season after the pandemic turned last year’s peak season into a disaster. The number of people going through security checkpoints at U.S. airports has topped 2 million seven times in the past two weeks, hitting levels not seen since early March 2020.

1st post-pandemic cruise ship from US sails away

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.

(AP)—The first cruise ship to leave a U.S. port since the coronavirus pandemic brought the industry to a 15-month standstill sailed away on Saturday with nearly all vaccinated passengers on board.

Celebrity Edge departed Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at 6 p.m. with the number of passengers limited to about 40% capacity, and with nearly all 1,100 passengers vaccinated against COVID-19. Celebrity Cruises, one of Royal Caribbean Cruise’s brands, says 99% of the passengers are vaccinated, well over the 95% requirement imposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A giant greeting was projected on a wall of one of the port buildings: “Someday is here. Welcome back.”

Passengers arrived with matching T-shirts that read phrases such as “straight outta vaccination” and “vaccinated and ready to cruise.”

“Words can’t describe how excited we are to be a part of this historic sailing today,” said Elizabeth Rosner, 28, who moved from Michigan to Orlando, Florida, in December 2019



The Celebrity Edge cruise ship is docked at Port Everglades, Tuesday, June 22, 2021, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

with her fiancé just to be close to the cruise industry’s hub.

To comply with both the CDC’s requirement and a new Florida law banning businesses from requiring customers to show proof of vaccination, Celebrity Cruises asked guests if they would like to share their vaccination status. Those who did not show or say they are vaccinated face additional restrictions.

Saturday’s sailing kicks off the cruise lines’ return to business with Carnival vessels already scheduled to depart from other ports next month.

“This is an emotional day for me. When I stepped on board the ship, I was proud. It’s a beautiful ship,” said Royal Caribbean Cruises’ CEO Richard Fain, after expressing condolences to the victims of the Surfside build-

ing collapse, less than 15 miles (about 24 kilometers) south of the port.

Celebrity Cruises had unveiled the \$1 billion boat in December 2018—betting on luxury cruising, offering a giant spa and multifloor suites. The seven-night cruise will sail for three days in the Western Caribbean waters before making stops in Costa Maya, Cozumel and Nassau.

Trump’s company could face criminal charges in New York City

NEW YORK (AP)—Manhattan prosecutors are considering filing criminal charges soon against Donald Trump’s company, stemming from a long-running investigation into the former president’s business dealings.

The New York Times, citing sources familiar with the matter, reported that charges could be filed against the Trump Organization as early as next week related to fringe benefits the company gave to top executives, such as use of apartments, cars and school tuition.

Trump Organization lawyer

Ron Fischetti said he met virtually with prosecutors Thursday for around 1 1/2 hours to try and persuade them not to seek a criminal indictment against the company, but that the charges would not be unexpected.

“The charges are absolutely outrageous and unprecedented, if indeed the charges are filed. This is just to get back at Donald Trump,” he told The Associated Press on Friday. “We’re going to plead not guilty and we’ll make a motion to dismiss.”

The Manhattan district

attorney’s office declined to comment.

No charges have been filed thus far in the long-running probe. Prosecutors have been scrutinizing Trump’s tax records, subpoenaing documents and interviewing witnesses, including Trump insiders and company executives.

Law enforcement officials familiar with the matter say the investigation has reached a critical point. A grand jury was recently empaneled to weigh evidence and New York Attorney General Letitia James said she was assigning two of her

lawyers to work with Vance on the criminal probe while she continues a civil investigation of Trump.

In addition to fringe benefits, prosecutors have looked into whether the Trump Organization lied about the value of real estate holdings to lower taxes or to obtain bank loans or insurance policies on favorable terms. They have also looked into the company’s role in paying hush money to two women who say Trump had affairs with them, accusations Trump has denied.

Nation

Crews at collapse site find body, raising death toll to five

SURFSIDE, Fla. (AP)—Rescue crews found another body in the rubble of a collapsed 12-story condominium tower near Miami on Saturday, raising the death toll to five as they raced to recover any survivors after fighting back fire and smoke deep inside the concrete and metal remains.

Miami-Dade Mayor Daniel Levine Cava announced the heightened toll at an evening news briefing, saying the identification of three bodies had dropped the number of unaccounted for down to 156. She said crews also discovered other unspecified human remains.

The Miami-Dade Police Department later Saturday said four of the five deceased had been identified, along with the apartments where they were at the moment of the collapse. One of the was the mother of a boy who was rescued the night the building toppled, another couple in their late 70s and early 80s and a 54-year-old man.

Officials said remains they find are being sent to the medical examiner, and they are also gathering DNA samples from family members to help identify them.

Separately, a video posted



online showed an official briefing families of missing loved ones. When he said they had found remains among the rubble, people began sobbing.

Throughout the day, rescue workers scoured the mountain of debris with trained dogs and sonar, searching for any survivors. "Our top priority continues to be search and rescue and saving any lives that we can," the mayor said.

But crews had to fight flames in the debris during the day. At one point Saturday, a fire

hose blasted one of the lower floors on the north side of the tower as white smoke or steam streamed out. A bitter, sulfur-like smell hung in the air.

"The stench is very thick," Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said.

A crane removed pieces of debris from the more than 30-foot pile in the city of Surfside, and scores of rescuers used big machines, small buckets, drones, microphones and their own hands to pick through the rubble.

For many with missing

loved ones, the wait was agonizing. The atmosphere was tense inside a hotel ballroom where around 200 family members were briefed, two people present told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversations.

The two said families frustrated with the slow pace of recovery efforts had demanded permission to go to the scene and attempt a collective shout—an attempt as much to find survivors as

^{AP} Rescue workers search in the rubble for survivors at the Champlain Towers South condominium, Saturday, June 26, 2021, in the Surfside area of Miami. The building partially collapsed on Thursday.

a cathartic farewell to those who had died.

Among those awaiting word of loved ones was Rachel Spiegel, whose mother, 66-year-old Judy Spiegel, lived on the sixth floor. Speaking beside her siblings, she said Saturday that "we're trying to hold it together."

"I know my mom is a fighter. I know she loves us. I know she doesn't want to give up.

So, you know, it's day three, so it's hard," Spiegel said.

President Joe Biden said via Twitter that he had spoken with DeSantis on Friday to offer assistance as needed.

"My heart is with the community of Surfside as they grieve their lost loved ones and wait anxiously as search and rescue efforts continue," Biden tweeted.

Authorities announced they were beginning an audit of buildings nearing their 40-year review—like the fallen Champlain Towers South—to make sure they're safe. The mayor asked other cities in the county to join the building review and said there will be state and federal funding to help.

ACROSS THE NATION

5 dead after hot air balloon crashes in Albuquerque street

A hot air balloon hit a power line and crashed onto a busy street in Albuquerque on Saturday, killing all five people on board, including the parents of an Albuquerque police officer, police said. The crash happened around 7 a.m. in the city's west side, police spokesman Gilbert Gallegos said. Police identified two of the passengers as Martin Martinez, 59, and Mary Martinez, 62—the parents of a prison transport officer with the Albuquerque Police Department. Police did not immediately release the others' names but said the male pilot, and a female and male passenger were from central New Mexico. Martin Martinez also had worked for Albuquerque police on bicycle patrol but most recently was a sergeant with the local school district's police force, authorities said. Some Albuquerque officers who responded to the crash had worked with him and were sent home because it took a toll on them, said police Chief Harold Medina. (AP)

'Not fun': Northwest heat wave builds, all-time records fall

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Oregon's largest city broke its all-time heat record on Saturday. It could beat the new mark on Sunday. Forecasters say many Pacific Northwest communities may sweat through the hottest days in their histories as temperatures soar during a heat wave that has sent residents scrambling for relief. Stores sold out of portable air conditioners and fans, hospitals

canceled outdoor vaccination clinics, cities opened cooling centers, baseball teams canceled or moved up weekend games, and utilities braced for possible power outages. Portland, Oregon, reached 108 degrees Fahrenheit (42.2 degrees Celsius) Saturday afternoon, according to the National Weather Service. The previous heat record for Oregon's largest city was 107 F (41.7 C), a mark hit in 1965 and 1981. Seattle reached 101 F (38.3 C) Saturday, making it the hottest June day on record and only the fourth time in recorded history the usually temperate city had topped 100 degrees.

Man jumps from moving plane at Los Angeles airport

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A passenger was taken to the hospital Friday night after jumping out of a moving plane at Los Angeles International Airport, authorities said. United Express flight 5365, operated by SkyWest, was pulling away from a gate shortly after 7 p.m. when the man unsuccessfully tried to breach the cockpit by pounding on the door, then managed to open the service door and jumped down the emergency slide onto the tarmac, according to the airport, the FBI and SkyWest. The man was taken into custody on the taxiway, treated for injuries that were not life-threatening and taken to the hospital, authorities said. The twin-engine Embraer 175, which was headed to Salt Lake City, returned to its gate, the airport said. Nobody else aboard the plane was injured.

Experts: Impact of Chauvin case on policing yet to be seen

By **TAMMY WEBBER**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin's conviction and lengthy prison sentence in George Floyd's murder could lead to better police hiring and training, law enforcement experts say. It could spur more effort to build trust among officers and communities.

And it might have made the public — and future jurors — more receptive to longstanding complaints about police interactions with minorities.

Even so, the case was so unusual—from bystander video of Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck for 9 1/2 minutes to police department brass testifying against him — that it's difficult to say it was a watershed moment for lasting change.

"The conviction was critically important, in part, because of how blatant the violence was and because of the way in which the video couldn't allow the lies that police often tell in these situations to dominate the narrative," said Sheila A. Bedi, a professor at Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law and director of the school's Community Justice & Civil Rights Clinic.

Derek Chauvin sentencing



Despite two other guilty verdicts on April 20, Minnesota statutes only allow for Chauvin to be charged with the most serious charge.



But the outcome in Chauvin's case—including his 22 1/2-year sentence—doesn't address deep-rooted issues of race and violence affecting police interactions with minorities that don't result in charges or convictions against officers, said Bedi, who has been involved in numerous use-of-force lawsuits against the Chicago Police Department.

"And until we get at that, I caution anyone to celebrate the conviction and sentence as a victory," she said.

Officers accused of brutality or other misconduct

against Black people rarely go to trial, and among those who have, the list of acquittals and mistrials is longer than the list of sentences after conviction. That includes acquittals in recent years of officers tried in the deaths of Philando Castile in suburban Minneapolis and Terence Crutcher in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Eleven non-federal law officers, including Chauvin, have been convicted of murder for on-duty deaths since 2005. Of those, the nine who were sentenced before Chauvin received sentences ranging from

six years, nine months, to life behind bars, with the median being 15 years, said Philip Stinson, a criminal justice professor at Bowling Green State University.

Still, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison said Friday that the outcome was a step toward accountability, even if not total justice. And he urged federal, state and local lawmakers to pass laws to improve policing, saying Chauvin's sentencing was "by itself not enough."

Chauvin's high-profile case likely led more people to believe longstanding complaints about police interactions with Black people, even if his actions were blatantly wrong, experts said. And that could make jurors less likely to simply believe police versions of events in the future.

"Extreme cases by their nature open up public awareness ... but it doesn't necessarily result in across-the-board reform because the situation was so unique," said former federal prosecutor Jeffrey Cramer, senior managing director of the consulting firm Guidepost Solutions. "What would be the reform? Don't put your knee on someone's neck for 9 1/2 minutes?"



Chauvin

World

Aquino, Philippine ex-leader who challenged China, is buried

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Former Philippine President Benigno Aquino III was buried Saturday with thousands lining the streets of Manila to remember him for standing up to China in bitter territorial disputes, striking a peace deal with Muslim guerrillas and defending democracy in the Southeast Asian nation where his parents helped topple a dictator.

Aquino died Thursday at age 61 of kidney disease arising from diabetes following a long public absence, after his single, six-year term ended in 2016. Family and friends sang a patriotic song after a silver urn with Aquino's remains was placed beside the tomb of his mother, former President Corazon Aquino. Military honors included a 21-gun salute at the private cemetery.

Aquino's family did not

want him or his parents buried at the national Heroes' Cemetery, where past presidents and top officials had been laid to rest, including dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Aquino's mother and his assassinated father, an anti-Marcos opposition senator, helped lead a resistance that sparked a 1986 army-backed "people power" revolt, which ousted Marcos.

"In his journey beyond, his two heroic parents will be there to embrace him," Archbishop Socrates Villegas said during Mass.

Villegas praised Aquino for living up to an image of a humble and incorruptible politician who detested the trappings of power. Fighting back tears, Villegas said he envied Aquino because he was now in a place "where God's commandments are no longer transgressed and



^{AP} A supporter sits beside a picture of former Philippine President Benigno Aquino III beside his tomb on Saturday, June 26, 2021 at a memorial park in suburban Paranaque city, Philippines.

God's name is no longer blasphemed, where vulgarity and brutality and terror are vanquished by compassion."

The remarks, broadcast live by TV networks, were an

oblique criticism of the current populist president, Rodrigo Duterte, whose brash style, expletive-laced rhetoric and tirades against the country's dominant church stood in sharp contrast to Aquino. Church leaders have criticized Aquino's successor for a brutal crackdown on illegal drugs that has killed thousands of petty suspects and alarmed Western governments and human rights watchdogs.

WORLD BRIEFS

UK virus cases hit highest since Feb 5 amid 'grab a jab'

LONDON (AP)—The U.K. on Saturday recorded its most new coronavirus infections since early February as the National Health Service ran a "grab a jab" initiative to further drive up vaccination rates. Government figures showed that another 18,270 people tested positive for the virus across the U.K., the highest daily number since Feb. 5. Over the past week, nearly 100,000 have tested positive, around 50% increase up on the week before. That has raised questions over whether lockdown restrictions will end as planned. Daily cases have risen fairly sharply over the past few weeks as a result of the delta variant, which was first identified in India and is considered by government scientists to be between 40% to 80% more transmissible than the previous dominant strain. It accounts for nearly all the new cases in the U.K.

Lava streams from crater as Indonesia's Mount Merapi erupts

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia's most volatile volcano erupted Friday, releasing plumes of ash high into the air and sending streams of lava with searing gas clouds flowing down its slopes. No casualties were reported. Clouds of hot ash shot 1,000 meters (3,280 feet) into the sky and an avalanche of lava and searing gas spilled down Mount Merapi's trembling slopes up to 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) at least six times since the morning as the vol-

cano groaned and rumbled, said Hanik Humaida, the head of Yogyakarta's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center. A series of strong pyroclastic flows were released from the actively growing lava dome in the inner summit crater of the 2,968-meter (9,737-foot) high volcano, Humaida said.

As virus surges in Uganda, hospitals accused of profiteering

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)—As virus cases surge in Uganda, making scarce hospital beds even more expensive, concern is growing over the alleged exploitation of patients by private hospitals accused of demanding payment up front and hiking fees. Uganda is among African countries seeing a dramatic rise in the number of infections amid a severe vaccine shortage. The pandemic is resurging in 12 of Africa's 54 countries, the World Health Organization reported Thursday, saying the current wave is "picking up speed, spreading faster, hitting harder." Africa's top public health official, John Nkengasong of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said Thursday that Africa's third wave is "very devastating" as the delta variant drives infections in many countries. Just 1% of people across Africa have been fully vaccinated, and Uganda has vaccinated under 1% of its 44 million people. It has confirmed 75,537 infections, including 781 deaths. The actual totals are believed to be much higher because only a few thousand samples are tested daily.

In Loving Memory of

† Jasmine Marie Masga King Kaipat

August 21, 1985- June 20, 2021
(Saipan)

In her new life, she now joins her:

Great Grandparents: †Pedro Muna Masga and †Cecilia Concepcion Masga
†Jose Atoigue Muna and †Concepcion Camacho Muna
†Isidro King and †Consolacion San Nicolas King
†Juan Salas Deleon Guerrero and †Francisca Ramos Deleon Guerrero

Grandparents: †Ignacio Concepcion Masga and †Susana Muna Masga
†Jose San Nicolas King and †Carmen Deleon Guerrero King

Sister: †Kisha Lyn Masga King

Her spirit and loving memory will forever live in the hearts of her:

Husband: Roy Roger Ayuyu Kaipat
Children: Roy Roger Jr. O. Kaipat, Kobe Jayron K. Castro, Kaleigh Reean K. Castro & Keowynn Francisco K. Kaipat
Parents: Maggie Muna Masga
Raymond Deleon Guerrero King/Amelia R. King (Step-mother)

Siblings/spouses/children: Alyssa Nicole Masga King/Byron Lester Cruz (*Kayven Xane, Byron Jr., Blayke Kyle, Khonor Ethan & Kheon Braylon*)
Colleen-Rae Masga King
Nathaniel Anthony Masga King
Caitlin Denise Masga King
Raymond King Jr.

Niece: Kierstin Konnisha Masga King

Jasmine is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, god-parents, relatives and friends.

Daily mass of intention for the repose of her soul is being celebrated at Kristo Rai Church at 6:00 a.m. and St. Jude Church at 6:00 p.m. followed by rosary at the residence of Maggie Masga in As Lito at 7:00 p.m. Funeral service will be held on Tuesday, June 29, 2021. At 8:40 a.m. she will be escorted from Borja's Funeral Home to the Mount Carmel Cathedral. Responso Services and Prayers will take place upon arrival. Last respects and final viewing will follow immediately after. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 a.m. followed by Interment Service at the Tanapag Cemetery where she will be peacefully laid to rest.

Un dangkulu na si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank You for all your prayers and support.

Roy Roger Kaipat, Maggie Masga, Raymond King, Children and Family.

Health & Wellness

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Tan Siu Lin
Foundation



Photo by NHORLEEN LILLES

NERVOUS ABOUT RESUMING ACTIVITIES?

How to manage 'COVID transition anxiety'

By ERICA PEARSON
STAR TRIBUNE

Let's say you love the State Fair and you really want to celebrate its post-pandemic return later this summer. But just the thought of being inside a packed building, waiting in a long line for cheese curds, makes you feel anxious.

There's a name for what you're feeling: COVID transition anxiety.

With COVID-19 restrictions lifted and long-awaited events on the horizon, some people are finding that they're hesitant to do the things they had looked forward to doing post-vaccine. Instead of feeling joy and anticipation, they're racked with unexpected feelings of anxiety or even panic.

We asked Reese Druckenmiller, a therapist with Mayo Clinic Health System, and Dr. C. Sophia Albott, a psychiatrist with University of Minnesota Health, about why this period of transition can be so difficult and what we can do to make it go more smoothly. Answers have been edited for space and clarity.

Q: Why might some people be feeling anxious now?

RD: Our brains like patterns. We like for things to come in predictable ways. So at first, when the pandemic hit and we were all doing these new things that we weren't used to doing, that caused us a lot of anxiety.

Now that we're getting back to some normalcy, for our brains and our anxiety, it doesn't re-

ally feel normal yet. And it will. Eventually our brain will start to go, "Oh, wait a minute, this is back to the old way. And I'm getting used to it."

CA: When we know what our boundaries are and the right thing to do, when there are limits set for us, we feel better. Having things like routines and going to bed on time and all of those things, they help people to keep unexpected emotions in check. It works for kids, and it works for adults, too.

Now that there is this situation where it seems like those clear-cut boundaries are gone, that contributes to anxiety about the right thing to do.

The pandemic is not over. There are still people who are getting infected. I had a colleague die. When those competing realities happen, it's harder for our brains to settle into [a feeling that] "my world is predictable and I know what is going to happen to me today." It's hard. That's why we feel this way.

What I hope is that people don't feel like this uneasiness is, in any way, inappropriate or wrong. I think the idea that we're going to go back and everything's just going to feel the way it did in February 2020 is not realistic.

Q: How long will this take?

RD: It's going to be different for every person. I can't give you a time, but what I can tell you about is how to make it go smoother and faster.

The first thing would be to recognize that that's what you're experiencing. Anxiety has this really sneaky trick, where it tries to take away our insight, and not make us realize

what's going on. Check in with your thoughts. Check in with how your body feels, check in with how you are behaving.

Some people act out and get kind of angry or frustrated or irritable. So look for these signs in yourself and say, "Oh, hey, that's probably anxiety." So name it. And then think about: What's my plan to engage in exposure?

Exposure means doing that thing that's making me anxious, even though it's making me anxious. The more that we do that thing that makes us anxious, the easier it's going to get.

Q: Is there a way to prepare to go to an event—a play or concert—that you feel anxious about attending?

CA: Often, one of the things that can perpetuate anxiety is avoiding things wholesale. Not talking to anyone about it, pretending it isn't there, just staying at home. So I think it's a good idea to acknowledge it and also then try to talk about it. Also explore ways to be around a crowd or be in a smaller group of people. See if that feels good, and once that feels good, then you can try [attending larger events], maybe they will feel a little bit less anxiety-provoking.

RD: Be on the offense, and say to yourself: "I've got this ticket to this concert. I kind of know what my anxiety is going to do. I know that when the day gets closer, I might start to ruminate about my worries. I might try to come up with excuses to avoid it. I might start to feel physically sick. But I'm going to know that those things are likely coming, and I'm going to remind myself that

I know how to deal with them, and I can do hard things." We don't have to feel 100% safe in order to engage in an activity.

Q: What can you do in the moment to manage this kind of anxiety?

RD: Sometimes just engaging in a mindfulness practice can help to bring us back into the moment. For example, with adults, I might say, "Hey, I just want you to take a little bit of time and use your five senses. One thing that you can see, one thing that you can hear, one thing that you can touch and so on, using those five senses to just ground yourself back into the here and now."

With kids, we might use that same strategy or we might use something a little bit more silly. Playing a game like the ABC game, where I'll say to a kid, "OK, you think of an animal that starts with an 'A' ..."

We have to be careful because we don't want kids and adults to think that that is going to take their anxiety away or fix it. It's just to get those emotions and those feelings to not be quite so big, so that you can have a more rational response.

Q: Should people continue to wear masks if that helps them feel comfortable?

RD: That's a hard one. In the world of anxiety, we talk about things that are crutches. We talk about things that serve a purpose to make us feel safe, but will often perpetuate our anxiety. Now, there may be people for whom it's appropriate to continue to wear a mask because of health conditions or such.

I would want a person to ask themselves: Is there a legitimate reason for me to continue to wear a mask, or is this serving as a crutch to perpetuate my anxiety?

CA: I think people just need to decide what feels right for them. I don't think there's anything wrong with continuing to wear a mask. The other piece, too, is that kids aren't vaccinated.

Q: What are some signs that you might want to have some professional help getting through this?

RD: This is true for anxiety or any mental illness: If it is interfering in your functioning—your employment, career, ability to parent, ability to have relationships, sleep, general overall well-being—if that's happening, we definitely want to get some outside help.

HEALTHY LIVING

To shed pounds, eat salad

Starting a meal with a healthy salad provides you with some good nutrients and can help cut the total number of calories in the meal if you choose ingredients carefully.

The right stuff

- Avoid high-fat foods, such as cheese, bacon and croutons
- Combine various greens with other low-fat veggies and fruits, such as peppers, cucumbers, carrots, celery and apples
- Dress the salad with high-quality olive oil and vinegar or other healthy dressing; avoid high-fat creamy ones

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, TNS Photo Service



Life & Style

Conan O'Brien ends TBS late-night show with snark, gratitude

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Conan O'Brien stayed true to form as he wrapped his TBS show "Conan" after nearly 11 years, bouncing between self-deprecating and smart-aleck humor before allowing himself a touch of sentiment.

"Try to do what you love with people you love, and if you can manage that, it's the definition of heaven on Earth," he said, marking the end of his third late-night show over 28 years. It's a tenure second only to Johnny Carson's 30 years on "Tonight."

O'Brien's next venture is a weekly variety series for HBO Max, set to arrive in 2022 with an as-yet-unannounced format.

The hour-long "Conan" finale Thursday was largely a trip down memory lane with

clips of guests including Steve Martin, Tom Hanks and Sarah Silverman, and highlights of specials taped outside the United States. Will Ferrell appeared by Zoom from Boston, with Jack Black on hand to salute O'Brien.

Ferrell noted that he's been a guest for the conclusions of O'Brien's previous shows, "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" and "Tonight," both on NBC but with widely varying runs: the former from 1993 to 2009, the latter for less than eight months in 2009-10.

"It's kind of become a tradition," O'Brien said of Ferrell's presence.

"It's become (expletive) exhausting," Ferrell replied. He then proceeded to perform farewells that he suggested

O'Brien should bank for probable future need, including for his new HBO Max series.

"People would say six episodes isn't a lot, but you packed enough entertainment in them for eight episodes," Ferrell said. He then lauded him for a string of projected talk show flops on Al Jazeera and Delta Airlines, and his YouTube "classic unboxing videos."

O'Brien, a writer for "The Simpsons" in his salad days,

sat for his exit interview with surprise HR rep Homer Simpson, who was unimpressed when reminded that O'Brien was a talk show host.

"Wow, a dying breed," Simpson told the animated version

of O'Brien. "There's only like 800 of you left."

Black limped onto the stage wearing an orthopedic



O'Brien

boot, which he and O'Brien explained was because of a badly sprained ankle Black suffered during pre-taping of what was supposed to be a big-finish action and dancing skit.

In its place, Black serenaded O'Brien and his longtime sidekick Andy Richter with revamped lyrics set to the signature Frank Sinatra

standard, "My Way."

"Conan, you are my friend. You are the best, and so is Andy," Black sang, switching up the lyrics to honor "Con's way."

The host, whose gravity-defying, trademark swoop of red hair has remained virtually unchanged through the years, wrapped up the show with heartfelt thanks to his colleagues, family and fans. He also shared a slice of philosophy.

Zimbabwe's Tsitsi Dangarembga wins prestigious German prize

BERLIN (AP)—Zimbabwean writer and filmmaker Tsitsi Dangarembga has been awarded a prestigious German prize for a body of work that has made her a prominent African literary voice.

Dangarembga, 62, was announced on Monday as this year's winner of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, which is endowed with 25,000 euros (\$29,700) and has been awarded since 1950. Dangarembga will receive it in Frankfurt on Oct. 24.

The jury said Dangarembga, who is the first Black woman to win the prize, is "not just one of her country's most important artists but also a widely audible voice of Afri-

ca in contemporary literature." It also pointed to her commitment to promoting culture in her country and opening it up for women, and to her fight for rights and political change in Zimbabwe.

Her works include the best-selling novel, "Nervous Conditions" and its sequel, "This Mournable Body."

Last July, Dangarembga was arrested and spent a night in detention for standing by a road in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, and holding up a placard that said "We Want Better. Reform Our Institutions."

She has also been awarded the PEN Pinter Prize and the PEN International Award for Freedom of Expression this year.

American, French artists revive hope on giant Paris mural

PARIS (AP)—A colorful human face emerges from waves like a call for hope above a Parisian street, in a giant message of optimism from American and French street artists painting a massive mural in the French capital that's slowly climbing out of its virus isolation.

Illustrator AJ Dongo, 29, who lives in California, and French graffiti artist Da Cruz, 44, started working in mid-June on the 25-meter (82-foot) high mural in the 19th arrondissement, in the northeast of Paris.

The project, to be inaugurated Saturday, is a symbol of creative rebirth, and of both cultures reconnecting after



lockdowns.

Da Cruz, who grew up in this Parisian neighborhood and used to travel regularly to different continents, said it was

hard for him to see his projects stopped amid the pandemic.

"I'm working in the street because I like showing my message to lots of different

Colosseum tourists can go underground to see 'backstage'

ROME (AP)—After 2 1/2 years of work to shore up the Colosseum's underground passages, tourists will be able to go down and wander through part of what had been the ancient arena's "backstage."

Italy's culture minister on Friday formally announced the completion of work to shore-up and restore the un-

derground section in the presence of the founder of Tod's, the shoe and luxury goods maker, who has footed the bill.

During the centuries when spectators filled the Colosseum to watch spectacles replete with gladiators and wild animals, the public was forbidden from venturing below stage level. The ban lasted from 80

A.D. when the amphitheater was inaugurated, until the last show in 523.

Dozens of mobile platforms and wooden elevators were employed in ancient times to haul up to stage level vivid scenery as well performers and animals for dramatic entrances.

Colosseum director Alfonsina Russo said tourists will be

able to stroll down a walkway 160 meters (530 feet) long to view some of what were originally 15 corridors that circled the underground levels.

Restoration work by teams of engineers, surveyors, construction workers, architects and archaeologists was interrupted during part of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project is supported by the French American Mural Art (FAMA) program, led by the U.S. Embassy, in association with local festival Ourcq Living Colors.

Tears keep flowing despite life's many blessings

DEAR ABBY: I am a very fortunate 60-year-old male. I have a wonderful life, great kids, I'm a new grandfather and I'm recently retired. I think I am a happy and overall positive person. Most people would be thrilled to have my life.

However, I can't seem to stop crying. I tear up at the end of every sad or romantic movie. I choke up when I'm around my loved ones, and it is only getting worse. I wonder if it is because of pain I experienced in my past (deaths of loved ones, divorce, etc.) or fear about the future. Do you have any insight based on your experience?

TEARING UP IN OHIO

DEAR TEARING UP: The death of loved ones can make a person increasingly emotional. Being able to express emotion is a gift, not a disability. You may simply be a sensitive individual, but because you say this is "only getting worse," it might benefit you to discuss what's going on with your physician or a licensed mental health professional who can put your concerns to rest.

DEAR ABBY: My ex-girlfriend and I have been good friends for the past five years. Even though our relationship didn't work out, I still want to be there for her as a friend. My ex isn't that financially responsible, nor is her family, and she

keeps asking me for bailouts. I have loaned her thousands of dollars since our breakup, Abby.

I am of two minds about this. Part of me feels I'm being taken advantage of. However, the other part of me knows she doesn't have many friends and, because I believe in karma, I tend to help those in need. Please tell me what I should do. Should I continue helping or let her fail?

LENDING A HELPING HAND

DEAR LENDING: There is a point after which "helping" becomes enabling. You reached that milestone years ago. It's time to let your ex-girlfriend suffer the consequences of her financial irresponsibility so you can focus on helping people who won't take advantage of your generosity.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I used to be very close to another couple in town. Before the pandemic, they caused quite a bit of pain and drama among our friend group, so we decided to add some distance. The pandemic provided the perfect excuse. We exchange texts every few weeks, but otherwise we don't interact much. The problem is, now that we're all vaccinated, they want to be friends again and we just aren't up for it. We don't know the best way to clearly end the friendship. How do you break up with friends?

MOVED ON IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR ABBY

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



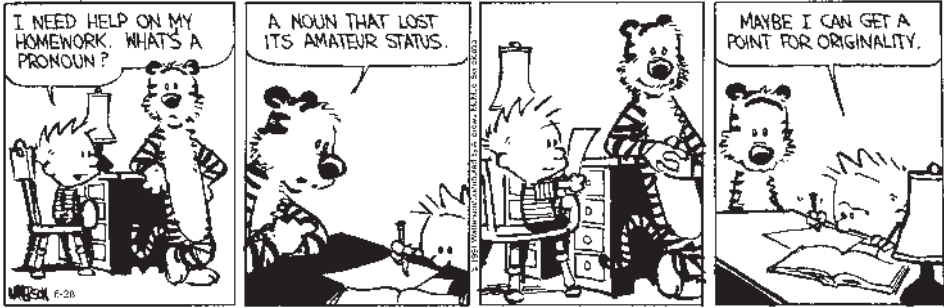
DEAR MOVED ON: If you want to end the friendship, a way to do that would be to be "busy" and not available to them. If you are asked for an explanation, tell them the pandemic forced you to rethink your schedule, that you see fewer people than you did before it happened—and therefore you are no longer available to the extent that you were. It's kinder than saying you think they are troubling drama queens, which would be unkind and cause hurt feelings.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



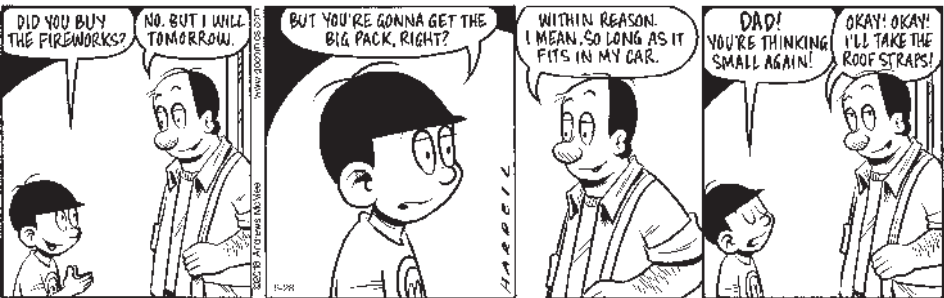
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 School org.
4 Painter Frida
9 Embassy VIP
12 Scale member
13 — the hole (hidden advantage)
14 Up to
15 Free
17 Chapel vow
18 "Shoot"
19 Enticingly unusual
21 Nome's state
24 Country's McEntire
25 Smack
26 Jurist Lance
28 Weary sounds
31 Airline to Tel Aviv
33 Catch-all abbr.
35 Lacking slack
36 Wizardry

DOWN

1 Unpaid TV ad
2 Youngster
3 The whole enchilada
4 Japanese drama
5 Overlay material
6 — Majesty
7 Metric measure
8 Cameo stones
9 Back to making trouble
10 Calf-length
11 United nations
16 Cyclades isle
20 Last write-up
21 Throat clearer
22 Oscar-winner
23 Upon quick examination
27 Mel of baseball
29 Video-streaming site
30 Flower part
32 Stead
34 Spider's traps
37 Honeydew alternative
39 Zedong follower
42 Squelched
44 In medias —
45 Japanese noodle
46 "Absolutely!"
50 Journal
51 ET's craft
52 King, in Cannes
53 Slithery fish

Solution time: 26 mins.

Last Friday's Answer 06/28

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kellie Pickler, 35; John Cusack, 55; Kathy Bates, 73; Mel Brooks, 95.

Happy Birthday: Keep the ball rolling. Don't let uncertainty based on what others do take over. Think and do for yourself, and success will follow. Be inventive and take an unusual path if it will help you learn something new and exciting. Let your emotions and your heart take the lead, and you won't be disappointed in the outcome. Trust in yourself. Your numbers are 6, 17, 23, 29, 31, 34, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Put your energy where it counts, and don't stop until you are happy with the results. Listen to reason and stick to cost-efficient plans. Physical fitness and a healthy routine will pay off. Romance is favored. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Keep your life simple and your plans doable. If you take on too much, you will look bad or give someone the wrong impression. Make a personal change that helps you hone your skills and accomplish your goals. **

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Focus on what's essential and strive to reach your destination. Refuse to let anyone intervene or throw you off track. Verify information and walk away from procrastinators and those who talk big but accomplish little. Put your energy where it counts. *****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Investigate, and you'll discover the ins and outs of something you want to pursue. Getting the lowdown will help you avoid making an

error that can cost you time and money. Make opportunities by getting involved in what interests you most. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Consider the best way to move forward. If you jump into something too quickly, you will face frustration. Be intelligent, talk to experts and do things right the first time. Avoid emotional spending and overreacting. Joint ventures are not favored. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll gravitate toward unusual people and situations. Have an open mind, but don't buy into someone's dream. Make a change that benefits only you. It's time to put your needs first. Your happiness depends on doing what's best for you. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Do the work yourself. If you count on others, you'll be disappointed. Keep up with the times, and you will find a suitable outlet for something you do well. Pitch what you have to offer, and pursue your dream. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Be open about your plans, and you'll find out quickly who is on your team. Put together a thorough pitch and explore how to receive funding for your project. Don't let a friend, relative or lover hold you back. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take matters into your own hands. Speak the truth and live within your means. Too much of anything will lead to problems. Get along with everyone by living up to your promises and doing your fair share. Don't take physical risks. **

EUGENIA LAST
THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY
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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): How you earn your living or handle your money will impact the way you live. Make changes that are conducive to a better lifestyle, not added pressure and stress. A disciplined attitude will pay off. Choose diplomacy when dealing with others. ****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Stay focused on your responsibilities. Finish what you start, and you'll gain respect as well as personal satisfaction. A change at home based on an intelligent deduction will meet with both approval and disapproval. You can't please everyone; do what's best for you. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get your facts straight before you share information. A mistake will leave you in an awkward position that can be costly. Don't take on unrealistic tasks or make impossible promises. A simple lifestyle will alleviate tension and uncertainty. ***

Birthday Baby: You are inventive, enthusiastic and family-oriented. You are sensitive and kind.

☾ Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☼ You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ☼☼ Focus and you'll reach your goals. ☼☼☼ Aim high; start new projects. ☼☼☼☼ Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Last Friday's Answer

8	6	9	5	2	7	1	3	4
4	7	1	6	9	3	5	8	2
3	2	5	8	4	1	9	6	7
5	8	3	7	1	4	6	2	9
9	1	7	2	6	8	4	5	3
6	4	2	9	3	5	7	1	8
1	5	8	3	7	9	2	4	6
7	3	6	4	5	2	8	9	1
2	9	4	1	8	6	3	7	5

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

8	6	9	5	2	7	1	3	4
4	7	1	6	9	3	5	8	2
3	2	5	8	4	1	9	6	7
5	8	3	7	1	4	6	2	9
9	1	7	2	6	8	4	5	3
6	4	2	9	3	5	7	1	8
1	5	8	3	7	9	2	4	6
7	3	6	4	5	2	8	9	1
2	9	4	1	8	6	3	7	5

WONDERWORD® By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

PAYING OFF LOANS Solution: 8 letters

ENOITITUTNUOCCAI
LBOATS DMAPPLYMN
UPOINTSEEAAEPOB
DFIXEDONSNNRORI
ERAGDTASOOOLITL
HSNNULESMVLDCL
CNNITTRWGEAGCOZ
SOIYSEWMBEFGINAL
EIVAPOECSEXATTE
STEPRN\$RIAPERIN
NARKTL@EKSEAAOD
ECSSTI@DCGKLCNE
PAAEEN@IERENTTR
XVRATESTHOMEAIS
EMYEGRAHCSIDEBT

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Account, Amortization, Anniversary, Apply, Asset, Balloon, Banks, Bills, Boats, Bridge, Check, Closed, Contract, Credit, Date, Debt, Discharge, Expenses, Fees, Final, Fixed, Home, Improvements, Lenders, Money, Online, Paying, Penalty, Personal, Points, Rates, Rent, Repairs, Schedule, Student, Taxes, Term, Title, Tuition, Vacations, Work

Last Friday's Answer: Signature
To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Difficulty Level ★ 6/28
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Suns outlast Clippers 84-80, take 3-1 lead in West finals



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Neither team could make a shot. The ball bounced crazily on and around the rim, but rarely went in.

In timeouts, the Suns only talked defense. The Clippers deliberately missed free throws in a desperate attempt to retain possession and fire up a 3-pointer.

In the end, former Clipper Chris Paul made clutch free throws on a night when everyone was missing.

Devin Booker scored 25 points before fouling out in the final minute and Phoenix escaped with an 84-80 victory Saturday night to take a 3-1 lead in the Western Conference finals.

The Suns can advance to the NBA Finals for the first time since 1993 with a victory Monday night in Phoenix.

"We're not looking too far ahead," Booker said.

The Clippers rallied from 0-2 deficits to win against Dallas and Utah and reach the West finals for the first time in franchise history.

"It's going to be hard and tough, but it has to be one game at a time," Paul George said. "Play as hard as we can in Game 5."

The Clippers struggled with poor shooting in all but the third quarter, when they made 10 of 17 shots to pull within three points. They got within one four times in the fourth, but could never take the lead in front of a sellout crowd of 18,222 that hung on every agonizing miss.

"It was a crazy, emotional game," Paul said.



Los Angeles Clippers guard Paul George, left, fouls Phoenix Suns guard Chris Paul during the first half in Game 4 of the NBA basketball Western Conference Finals Saturday, June 26, 2021, in Los Angeles.

breakthrough."

Paul tossed up an alley-oop pass that Ayton slammed and Booker hit a jumper, keeping the Suns ahead 75-72.

Maddeningly, shots either rimmed out for both teams or hit the rim and bounced away, creating frantic scrambles for loose balls.

"It was a skirmish under the basket with the ball bouncing all over the place," Williams said.

Paul ran off seven straight points early in the third, dropping his old team into a 13-point hole.

But the Clippers outscored the Suns 20-10 from there and trailed 69-66 heading into the fourth. Phoenix went without a field goal over the final few minutes of the third, when Booker made 4 of 6 free throws.

The Clippers shot 13 of 44 in the first half. None of them could get it going: George and Jackson were 3 of 11 and Marcus Morris was 1 of 6.

Phoenix raced to leads of 14-2 and 20-9 in the first quarter. The Clippers made just one of their first seven shots — a dunk by Zubac. Seven of George's 11 points in the half came on a 3-pointer and four free throws.

Booker picked up three fouls in the first half, two of them within minutes of each other in the second quarter. At that point, the Suns were up by 16.

LA shot 32% (27 of 83) for the game; Phoenix was barely better at 36% (31 of 86). The Clippers, who led the league in 3-point shooting during the regular season, made five; the Suns hit four.

"That was a slugfest," Suns coach Monty Williams said. "It wasn't Offense 101, for sure."

Clippers coach Tyrone Lue said, "We had a chance to take the lead on 12 possessions and couldn't do it. It just wouldn't fall for us."

Deandre Ayton added 19 points and a career playoff-high 22 rebounds, and Paul had 18

points and seven assists.

George had 23 points, 16 rebounds and six assists before fouling out with 1 second left. Reggie Jackson added 20 points for the Clippers. Ivica Zubac had 13 points and 14 rebounds.

The Clippers successfully challenged a call in the final minute that led to Booker's sixth foul. Terance Mann scored and they trailed 79-76.

The final 13 seconds turned into a free-throw shooting contest, with the Suns fouling to try to keep the Clippers off the 3-point line. Paul made 5

of 6. The Clippers were 4 of 8.

With injured Kawhi Leonard again watching from a suite, the Clippers outscored the Suns 30-19 in the third after trailing by 16 in the first half.

Both teams' offense collapsed in the fourth, when the Suns outscored the Clippers 15-14.

"It was tough because we fought all the way to get it to a one-point game, and we had looks that we normally make all season and they weren't falling," Mann said. "The game could have easily went a whole different way if we

were hitting those shots."

Booker picked up his fourth foul early in the fourth, along with a technical for arguing the call. That put George at the line and he made 2 of 3, missing the last one that would have tied the game for the first time. Instead, the Clippers trailed 71-70.

It stayed that way for minutes, with both teams going ice cold.

"At that point, you're just relying on your defense and mental stamina," Williams said.

George said, "You just try to play through it and get a

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks' path to the Eastern Conference finals provides reason to remain optimistic after a humbling Game 2 loss to the Milwaukee Bucks evened the series at 1-1.

The Bucks also can rely on their postseason history to boost their belief in their championship hopes. This is Milwaukee's second conference finals appearance in three years, following a loss to Toronto in 2019. This talent-rich roster led by Giannis Antetokounmpo was widely expected to contend for a title this season.

Thanks to Friday night's resounding 125-91 win in Game 2, the Bucks take momentum into Sunday night's Game 3 in Atlanta. "At the end of the day, you know, there's got to be some urgency, but you still have to enjoy the fact that we're here, you know, because we worked extremely hard to be in the last four teams standing," Antetokounmpo said after leading the Bucks with 25 points.

Young Hawks try to regroup at home in Game 3 against Bucks

"But you know, now going on the road obviously there is going to be some urgency."

This is only the Hawks' second conference finals appearance in their Atlanta history. They were swept by Cleveland in 2015.

The Hawks, the No. 5 seed, already have surpassed expectations. They finished last in their Southeast Division and missed the playoffs each of the last three years before suddenly learning to win under interim coach Nate McMillan this season.

Atlanta has been an underdog in each playoff round. When facing the New York Knicks in the first round and the top-seeded Philadelphia 76ers in the conference semifinals, the Hawks won their series opener on the road before losing the second game. They have followed the same path against Milwaukee.

The Hawks' staggering Game 2 loss was a reminder

they are starting three players — Trae Young, John Collins and Kevin Huerter — who are in their first postseason.

The Bucks never trailed and led by 41 points.

The young Hawks have proved they can win close playoff games. They are 4-0 in games decided by no more than three points and 6-1 when the margin is no more than seven. Now they must demonstrate they are resilient.

"We've just got to up our level of competition, of intensity," Collins said. "I feel like this is part of us growing into the mature players that can handle a championship run, as this is our first. And not to make any excuse, but these are the type of things that happen. It's on us to improve and make adjustments."

TRAE'S SWAG

Young will be challenged to reclaim the swagger he dis-

played when he scored 48 points in Atlanta's 116-113 Game 1 win on Wednesday night. He had an early highlight in Game 2 when his steal and long jumper cut Milwaukee's lead to 15-12. He celebrated by shaking his shoulders with a shimmy he unveiled in the opening game.

It was a rare highlight on a night of struggles for Young. He had only 15 points and matched his career high with nine turnovers. He accepted responsibility for the loss.

"It was just one of those nights, and sometimes it happens like that," Young said. "It sucks it happened tonight, but we've got to be able to bounce back."

RULING THE PAINT

The 3-point shot is an important part of Milwaukee's attack, but the Bucks proved they thrive when driving to the bas-

ket. The Bucks can be expected to try to repeat that winning formula on Sunday night.

Led by Antetokounmpo, the Bucks outscored the Hawks 62-30 in the paint. It was the recipe for the two-time MVP to make 11 of 18 shots from the field while adding a game-high nine rebounds. He was dominant despite missing his three 3-pointers.

"I think he set a tone early," said Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer. "There were a couple drives and finishes that were kind of just what we expect from Giannis."

FREE AND CLEAR

McMillan will be watching to make sure officials continue to monitor Antetokounmpo's time at the free-throw line after the NBA said 10-second violations should have been called late in Game 1. Antetokounmpo made three of four free throws in Game 2

and insisted he did nothing to shorten his routine at the line.

"My mindset going into this game was go through my routine, get as many dribbles as I can, get my breath and just shoot my shot," he said.

REDDISH RETURNS

Perhaps the most encouraging sign for the Hawks in the series was the return of Cam Reddish from an Achilles injury. He scored 11 points in 17 minutes in his first appearance since Feb. 21.

"To be honest, that was the only positive thing tonight," Young said.

Reddish gives Atlanta more perimeter depth as Bogdan Bogdanovic is limited by right knee soreness.

"It felt good," Reddish said. "I was excited to get back out there. Obviously it felt a little bit weird at first, but as the game went on, got better, got more comfortable. I'm looking forward to getting on to the next game."

Dbacks rout Padres 10-1, end record 24-game road losing skid



SAN DIEGO
(AP)—It had been 62 days

and 24 road games since the Arizona Diamondbacks shook hands on the field after a victory.

"You can't imagine how good it feels," manager Torey Lovullo said after the Diamondbacks snapped their record 24-game road losing streak by routing the San Diego Padres 10-1 on Saturday night.

Merrill Kelly threw six strong scoreless innings and Eduardo Escobar had four hits and five RBIs.

Escobar and Christian Walker homered for the Diamondbacks, who hadn't won away from Chase Field since April 25, when Madison Bumgarner pitched seven no-hit innings at Atlanta.

"I'm proud of these guys," Lovullo said. "We played a real good baseball game today, we had a good approach and we won our first road game in a couple months. It's actually hard to even think about, it's hard to say, but I've heard several people talking about it already so it's a burden we've been walking around with and it feels real nice to get rid of."

Baseball's worst team at 21-56 coming in, the Diamondbacks had dropped 20 of 21 games and 34 of 37 overall. They lost 11-5 in the series opener Friday night when Padres star Fernando Tatis Jr. homered in his first three at-bats.

But the Diamondbacks bounced back with a runaway victory against the Padres, who opened this homestand by taking four against the Reds and three against the defending World Series champion Dodgers.

Arizona managed to quiet the fans who had rocked Petco Park the previous eight games, which were the first since 100% capacity was allowed under the state's reopening plan.

Escobar connected for a two-run homer, and drove in runs with a double, a single and a groundout. He finished a triple shy of the cycle.

"No one comes to the ballpark to lose, but I still believe in my team and the talent on this team," Escobar said through a translator.

Kelly (4-7) allowed five hits, struck out five and walked none.

Dodgers 3, Cubs 2

In Los Angeles, Cody Bellinger hit a walk-off solo home run in the ninth inning to lift Los Angeles over visiting Chicago, ripping a 3-1 pitch over the fence in center with two outs in the ninth off Cubs reliever Keegan Thompson (3-2) to give the Dodgers their second straight win in the four-game series.

Dodgers starter Julio Urias struck out a career-high 12



AP
Arizona Diamondbacks' David Peralta reacts after hitting a double during the fifth inning of a baseball game against the San Diego Padres, Saturday, June 26, 2021, in San Diego.

fly to Nick Maton, before the Mets built their winning rally in similarly piecemeal fashion against Hector Neris (1-5).

Pinch-hitter Trevor Blankenhorn led off the bottom of the ninth with a grounder that Rhys Hoskins misplayed for an error. Billy McKinney drew a pinch-hit walk before Kevin Pillar loaded the bases with an infield single. Luis Guillorme walked on a 3-2 pitch to force home Blankenhorn, and one out later Conforto drove home the winning run.

Cardinals 3, Pirates 1

In St. Louis, Paul DeJong and Paul Goldschmidt hit long solo home runs to power St. Louis past visiting Pittsburgh.

The Cardinals snapped their five-game losing streak while winning for just the seventh time in their past 25 games. Meanwhile the Pirates lost their 12th road game in their past 14 tries.

Winning pitcher Adam Wainwright (6-5) allowed one run on six hits in six innings. He struck out eight batters and walked only one. Colin Moran had two hits for Pittsburgh.

Blue Jays 12, Orioles 4

In Buffalo, NY, Randal Grichuk hit a three-run home run and had four RBIs, Teoscar Hernandez added a solo homer and three RBIs and Toronto defeated visiting Baltimore at Buffalo.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. added a two-run blast for the Blue Jays, who have won two of the first three games of the four-game series. Bo Bichette had three of Toronto's 15 hits with an RBI double.

Blue Jays left-hander Hyun Jin Ryu (7-4) allowed four runs, seven hits and two walks in 6 2/3 innings. Cedric Mullins and Pedro Severino each had a pair of RBIs for Baltimore.

Rays 13, Angels 3

In St. Petersburg, Fla., a career-best four hits and two RBIs from Ji-Man Choi helped pace Tampa Bay to a 13-3 victory against host Los Angeles.

The Rays totaled 15 hits, with Manuel Margot and Mike Zunino each knocking in home runs. Tampa Bay scored 11 straight runs after briefly falling behind 3-2 in the third.

Rookie Shane Bieber (3-2) logged a career-high six innings and had a strong outing, allowing three runs on four hits while striking out

seven and walking two. Anthony Rendon had two RBIs for the Angels.

Brewers 10, Rockies 4

In Milwaukee, Christian Yelich's two-run homer highlighted the six-run eighth inning that broke open a tie game and sent surging Milwaukee to a fourth straight win with a victory over visiting Colorado.

In a 4-4 game, Milwaukee loaded the bases with nobody out. Omar Narvaez followed with a go-ahead sacrifice fly and Luis Urias' two-run single through the drawn-in infield made it 7-4. Yelich then belted his fifth homer of the season to right-center field and Willy Adames later delivered an RBI double.

Brad Boxberger (3-2) got the win with an inning of scoreless relief, giving up no hits with two walks and two strikeouts. Carlos Estevez (2-1) took the loss and allowed four runs on two hits and a walk, retiring just one batter in the eighth.

Reds 4, Braves 1

In Cincinnati, Jesse Winker homered for the first time in nearly three weeks and Luis Castillo (3-10) threw seven shutout innings as Cincinnati beat visiting Atlanta.

With the wind gusting out to left, Winker crushed an Ian Anderson fastball 435 feet to the seats in right-center for a 1-0 Cincinnati lead in the first. It was Winker's team-leading 18th homer and first since his three-homer game June 6 at St. Louis.

Winker, who made a diving attempt for a Ronald Acuna Jr. double in the third, left the game after five innings due to a right hip contusion. Guillermo Heredia and William Contreras each had two hits for the Braves.

Rangers 8, Royals 0

In Arlington, Kyle Gibson (6-0) pitched seven innings of two-hit ball and struck out 10 as host Texas beat Kansas City in Arlington as Joey Gallo paced the Rangers offense, finishing the day 2-for-3 with two home runs and five RBIs.

The Rangers assured themselves of their first series win since sweeping Houston on May 21-23, and go for the sweep of the Royals on Sunday.

Kansas City went with a bullpen game with Kyle Zimmer opening up and throwing 22 pitches (two walks, two strikeouts) in the first before turning the game over to Kris Bubic (2-3) for the second. Bubic hit the first batter he faced and gave up three runs while only recording two outs before being pulled.

batters in 5 1/3 innings. The left-hander allowed two runs, five hits and walked one, but for the third straight outing could not secure his 10th victory of the season.

Joe Kelly, Garrett Cleavinger, Phil Bickford and David Price (3-0) blanked the Cubs over the final 3 2/3 innings. Cubs right-hander Alec Mills allowed two runs and eight hits in four innings, striking out two and walking two.

Giants 6, Athletics 5, 10 innings

In San Francisco, Curt Casali put a happy ending on his nightmarish game when he doubled home Steven Duggar from first base with one out in the last of the 10th inning, capping a two-run rally that pushed host San Francisco past Oakland.

Down 5-4 after a Matt Chapman sacrifice fly in the top of the inning, the Giants got even on an RBI single by Duggar off Athletics reliever Burch Smith (1-1) that scored Brandon Crawford with one out.

Casali, who had struck out in each of his previous four plate appearances, then lined a double into the left-field corner. San Francisco closer Jake McGee (3-2) was credited with the win despite allowing a run without issuing a hit in the top of the inning. The Giants (50-26) are the first team in the majors to reach 50 victories.

Red Sox 4, Yankees 2

In Boston, Nathan Eovaldi took a shutout into the eighth inning and tossed 7 2/3 innings of one-run ball against his former team as host Boston beat New York to improve to 5-0 this season against their

rival after a three-game road sweep of the Yankees on June 4-6 and winning 5-3 in the series opener Friday.

Eovaldi (8-4) allowed seven hits and walked none while striking out six batters. Enrique Hernandez, Bobby Dalbec, Hunter Renfroe and Xander Bogaerts each drove in a run for the Red Sox.

DJ LeMahieu finished 4-for-5 with a solo home run and two RBIs for New York. Yankees starter Jordan Montgomery (3-2) allowed three runs on eight hits with a pair of walks and five strikeouts in six innings. New York has dropped three of its last five games.

Marlins 3, Nationals 2

In Miami, rookie Zach Thompson struck out 11 batters -- the most by any Miami pitcher since 2019 - in beating visiting Washington.

Nationals leadoff batter Kyle Schwarber, perhaps the hottest hitter in the majors entering the game, went 0-for-4 with three strikeouts and had his six-game hit streak snapped. Schwarber has 22 homers this season, including 13 in his past 15 games and nine in his past seven contests.

Instead of Schwarber, this game's hitting star was Miami's Jon Berti, who went 2-for-3 with the go-ahead homer and a double. Thompson (2-2), who was making just his fourth career start, lasted six innings, allowing four hits, two walks and two runs for his first quality start.

Tigers 3, Astros 1, 1st Game Astros 3, Tigers 2, 2nd Game

In Detroit, Zack Short blasted his first career home run,

Casey Mize (5-4) tossed six strong innings and host Detroit snapped Houston's 11-game winning streak Saturday in the opener of the day-night doubleheader.

Houston's winning streak was one shy of the franchise record, which it established on three occasions.

Short was called up from Triple-A Toledo earlier in the day to serve as the 27th man on the roster for the doubleheader. In addition to his fifth-inning home run, the 26-year-old shortstop had a double.

Yordan Alvarez and Carlos Correa hit back-to-back homers during a three-run sixth and Houston rallied past host Detroit in the nightcap of a day-night doubleheader.

For Alvarez, it was his 13th homer of the season while Correa now has 15 long balls. Jose Altuve reached base twice and scored a run for Houston. Lance McCullers Jr. (5-1) allowed two runs on five hits and struck out seven in 5 1/3 innings. Ryan Pressly struck out the side in the seventh for his 12th save.

Jonathan Schoop and Omar Mazara each had a pair of hits for the Tigers.

Mets 4, Phillies 3

In New York Michael Conforto hit the game-winning sacrifice fly as New York mounted another late-inning comeback to edge visiting Philadelphia a day after the Mets forced extra innings in the seventh inning of each game of a doubleheader, and they now have won two of the first three games of the four-game series.

The Phillies took the lead without the benefit of a base hit in the top of the ninth against Edwin Diaz (2-2), who gave up the tiebreaking sacrifice

Deleon Guerrero, Aguon are low net winners

By MARK RABAGO

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Ray Aguon and Gerald Deleon Guerrero won the low net category of the Inaugural Commonwealth Cancer Association Golf Open Fundraising Tournament held last June 19 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

Aguon and Deleon Guerrero fired a net score of 67.60 after a gross score of 2-under 70. The duo sported a 2.40 handicap and went 36 in the first nine holes and 34 in back nine holes. Palik Thompson and John Matsumoto finished second, while former representative Larry Guerrero and Fred Camacho completed the Top 3.

The 27-year-old Deleon Guerrero, who is 12 handicap, said he and Aguon just played their game and took it one hole at a time.

"We just remained patient and made our shots," he said.

Deleon Guerrero also joked that he won't divulge to his partner, Aguon, that they won the low net competition. The 14-handicap Aguon already left by the time the awards ceremony started.

But kidding aside, Deleon Guerrero said he and his 51-year-old golf partner took part in the tournament because it was a for a good cause.

"Very good day for golf. We also just wanted to be



MARK RABAGO

Low net winner Ray Aguon is flanked by Commonwealth Cancer Association members, led by president Roman "Bo" Palacios, during the awards ceremony of the Inaugural Commonwealth Cancer Association Golf Open Fundraising Tournament held last June 19 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

here to support the cause. The Commonwealth Cancer Association whenever there's government functions they always out there supporting so it's high time we give back to them," he said.

A total of 28 pairs took part in the two-person best ball double Peoria low net category of the CCA golf tournament. CNMI national golf team mainstays Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho and Marco Peter topped the low

gross category, while Jounghoon Park and Sun Ho Kang and junior golfers Jian Zhi Min and Zhi Zhi Min finished second and third, respectively.

CCA executive director Juan L. Babauta congratulated the winners and thanked everyone who took part in the non-profit organization's first foray into a golf fundraising tournament. He also thanked all the sponsors and volunteers who made the event



a rousing success, adding that funds raised in the CCA Golf Open Fundraising Tournament will benefit the CCA's programs and essential services.

In 2003, CCA began as an alliance of volunteers and became formally chartered and incorporated in 2008. It achieved a tax-exempt under 501 (c)(3), status in 2009 and since then has been providing direct client financial assistance such as nutritional supplements and other per-

COBY

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practiced for a day for the competition and tried to perfect three slam dunks. Coming into the slam dunk contest, he wasn't sure he was going to win.

"I thought I was gonna lose. I thought Mintac was going to take it," he said.

NMIVA

From Page 20

While there were really no definitive goals that NMIVA set, Quan saw a lot of opportunities for growth and potential

"During implementation, it's important to then make adjustments when needed, like when you have 91 participants. There were many lessons learned in this clinic from the coaching and hosting perspectives. This was an opportunity to learn from the experience and then do the next one better so that we get to a point where the operation is seamless and the environment is conducive to the participant getting as much time and repetition as possible in these clinics," she said.

The NMIVA president they are looking at the big picture when it comes to rebuilding the CNMI national volleyball team and the series of clinics with Rabago is just the first step in its vision to invigorate the sport and raise local players' level of play to the point where the Commonwealth could again hold its own in regional volleyball competitions.

"The process of building a regionally competitive national team does not happen overnight so it was very inspiring and motivating to see that the interest for volleyball in our community is still there and it just needs to be brought out and cultivated. Overall, we are very happy with the results and are thankful that coach Rabago is able to help us be-

sonal needs, as well as offering certain types of medical equipment, e.g. hospital beds, wheelchairs, oxygen concentrator, etc. as prescribed by locally licensed physicians in the CNMI to those individuals who are receiving treatment for cancer.

Babauta also encourages the community to learn about CCA's programs and contribute to the very important and worthwhile work of the association. For more information, you can contact CCA at 682-0050 or via email at ccamarianas@gmail.com, or visit our website at www.ccamarianas.org or visit the CCA office at the Gualo Rai Plaza Building, located along Chalan Pale Arnold Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

Santos also said he didn't hold back in the slam dunk contest even as his Mix Breed team was set to challenge Mintak's Hole in the Wall in the open championship game later in the day.

"100% I always give my 100%," when asked how much he exerted in the slam dunk contest.

gin this journey," she said.

The weeklong clinic had a tremendous effect on the youth that took part in it and you only need to read the comments of four participants. "It was a great and fun experience! I'd love to do it again, but with some scrimmages! Thank you coach Mike for your time and effort," said 17-year-old Kepina Tababa. For 17-year-old Madellen Narciso, the clinic gave her a chance to improve her volleyball game. "This was a great opportunity to learn more about the sport and to develop new skills. Thank you, coach Mike and everyone who helped out to make it happen, looking forward to the next one!"

This sentiment was shared by Andrei Bayking. "It was a wholesome experience! It was great seeing many kids from different ages participating in the program. I would definitely join again next time! Thanks again, coach Mike!" said the 18-year-old.

The clinic also served as a respite from the COVID-19 pandemic that has cooped up the island's youth for several months. Just ask 17-year-old Maury Zon Tybaco, who said, "Volleyball has been my all-time favorite sport, so it was an amazing opportunity to train once again after the improvement of the COVID-19 situation. In this camp, not only was I able to take the proper steps of serving, receiving, and spiking but had the opportunity of training with talented passionate people whom I share similar interests of the sport," she said.

HOLE

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later moved them within 3 points, 6-9.

Mintak was clutch personified in the next few plays, as his rainbow shot extended Hole in the Wall's advantage to 5 points, 11-6, with time down to 4:57.

Sablan and company continued to battle and trimmed their deficit down to 4 points a couple of times with the last time at 9-13, before Mintak personally took charge on a 2-0 run to put the game away and seal the championship for Hole in the Wall.

Mintak top-scored with 8 points, while Blake and Mendiola added 4 and 3 markers, respectively. Sablan paced Mix Breed with 5 points, while Santos and Franko Bondoc added 3 points apiece. Jeff Castro completed the four-man team of Mixed Breed.

Mendiola, a former Guam national team member who used to be known as Dennis Camacho, said Hole in the Wall was as surprised as everyone else that they topped the tournament.

"We didn't expect to win. We just came out and tried to have a good time. It was a great opportunity to play with young guys. So, we came out



MARK RABAGO

Hole in the Wall's Mak Mintak splits the defense of Mix Breed's Jeff Castro and Greg Sablan in the finals of the open division of the Marianas Mariana Islands Basketball League 3x3 Season 2 tournament yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

and just did it," he said.

The Department of the Fire and Emergency Medical Services commissioner also thanked his teammates for sticking to their strategy of him coming off the bench.

"Because I was coming out of retirement the strategy was to let the younger boys play first and conserve my energy and keep rotating out. Toward the end, I needed to play a little bit more they kind of let me

play a little bit more. Thanks to our point guard Mr. Mak as he held us strong by controlling that ball and managing the game and he was a little bit strong for us," he said.

Mendiola even showed that through the years he's become deadeye shooter from 3-point land or in the case of the 3x3 from 2-point land, hitting a crucial rainbow hit in their quarterfinals win against IT&E Ali'i. "I got lucky on that 3."

Mintac, for his part, shrugged off his upset loss in the slam dunk contest earlier to tow Hole in the Wall to the championship.

"[I was] really tired in the slam dunk [contest] because I just finished the semifinals. [I want] to thank my teammates for helping me win the MVP. [It was also all] about teamwork and go to the mismatches because we're a tall team," he said.

For Blake, his decision to defect from Mix Breed to Hole in the Wall proved to be a good move as the big man now has won back-to-back 3x3 championships. He also savored playing with Mendiola, as the 6'1" center's presence allowed him to play power forward.

"Easier for us to get rebounds and put-backs," he said.

IT&E and Cristiano's are the "MVP" sponsors of the MIBL 3x3 Season 2. Shirley's Coffee Shop, Eats Easy, Hong Ye Hardware, The Angry Penne, Latte Built Gym, Hot Deals, and The Game Athletics also supported the event as "All-Star" sponsors.

Results of the 16-and-under and women's division of the MIBL 3x3 Season 2 tournament will be published in the next issues of the *Saipan Tribune*.



Suns outlast Clippers
84-80, take 3-1 lead
in West finals

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Deleon Guerrero,
Aguon are low net
winners

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Hole In the Wall tops 3x3 tourney



MARK RABAGO
From left, Hole in the Wall's Joe Sablan, Mak Mintak, Dean Blake, and Dennis Mendiola pose with their championship rings around their necks and trophy after winning the finals of the open division of yesterday's Marianas Mariana Islands Basketball League 3x3 Season 2 tournament at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Mendiola, who came out of semi-retirement to play in the 3x3, rebounded like he was 10 years younger and his put-back with 5:53 remaining gave Hole in the Wall an early 8-3 lead.

But Mixed Breed refused to go down without a fight, as freshly inserted Coby Santos' 3-pointer and a timely hit by Greg Sablan few moments

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Coby wins slam dunk contest



MARK RABAGO
Mix Breed's Cody Santos wows the crowd with one of his high-flying dunks in the slam dunk competition of yesterday's Marianas Mariana Islands Basketball League 3x3 Season 2 tournament at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Long and wiry Coby Santos mimicked his somewhat namesake to win the slam dunk competition of the Marianas Mariana Islands Basketball League 3x3 Season 2 tournament yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The 20-year-old Northern Marianas College student channeled his inner Kobe Bryant and even sported the late Lakers great's jersey to beat Erik Joe in the finals, 58-47.

Instead of the regulation 10-foot rim, organizers lowered it to 9 1/2 feet to give competitors a better chance of completing their slam dunks.

In his first dunk in the finals, Santos bounced the ball high before making a 360 and slamming it home for a perfect 30 points from judges Clint Albert, Keith Nabors, and David John Apatang. He made an easier but still impressive slam in his second dunk in the finals that

netted him 28 points.

Joe finished with 22 points in his first dunk, as he made a simple slam after being pressed for time. He tried a Vince Carter elbow dunk in his second try but instead completed more like a middle arm dunk. That gave him 25 points as he wound up with 47 points.

In the eliminations, Santos wowed the crowd with his high-flying antics and finished with 56 points in his two dunks (27 and 29). Joe came second with 52 points, as he logged 24 points in his first dunk and 28 points in his second, which saw him dunk over a friend as tall as he is.

Mak Mintac was the third dunker of the competition, but exhaustion got the better of him and he was the first to get the boot with only 50 points (23 and 27) for his two slams in the elimination round.

Santos, who said he first dunked when he was 18 years old in 2019, said he

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By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

There was nothing pedestrian about Hole in the Wall after the Eats Easy-backed team topped the open division of the Marianas Mariana Islands Basketball League 3x3 Season 2 tournament yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

MVP Mak Mintak, Dean Blake, Dennis Mendiola, and Joe Sablan led early on before repulsing a late comeback by defending champion Mixed Breed to win 15-11 in the third and final championship game of the two-day tournament.

NMIVA amazed by turnout at weeklong clinic

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The new leadership of the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association under president Somia Quan is off to a good start with its weeklong clinic under the supervision of FIVB Level III certified coach and Oceania Sports Education master educator Mike Rabago attracting more than its expected number of attendees.

"We hoped to have at least 5-10 participants per age group so having a turnout of 91 kids was amazing—albeit

a little overwhelming. This was a very good exercise for the coaches because the first two days were planning and then the end of the week was implementation," said Quan.

The clinic was the second in



a series of three NMIVA has conducted with the help of Rabago and was held from June 14 to 19 at the Agape Gymnasium along Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

"We didn't set too many

goals with this clinic aside from nailing down the content of the clinic and getting our coaches involved with the kids under Mike's supervision," said Quan.

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MARK RABAGO
FIVB Level III certified coach and Oceania Sports Education master educator Mike Rabago makes a point during the last day of the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association clinic last June 19 at the Agape Gymnasium.